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Valley Transit Authority

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GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

Issue No. 1
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The Year Ahead

We tend to assume that the bus that got us to work or shopping today will be there tomorrow, running as usual on its fixed schedule. When the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority adopted its Fiscal Year 1982 budget in June, it did so with an eye to creating greater efficiencies throughout the system. Adoption of the $9.2 million budget reflected the need to only slightly increase the amount of money spent on transit in the Valley.

Running transit systems has not been a money-making or even a break-even proposition for years. Under the 1964 Federal Urban Mass Transportation Act, capital grants were made available for the purchase and construction of transit improvements such as buses and buildings. Operating subsidies were made available in 1974 to keep buses running, when operating costs could no longer be made up from the farebox.

PVTA's budget has grown from $2.5 million in its first year of operation in 1976 to the current estimated budget of $9.2 million. This also reflects an increase in miles of service run from 2 million to over 5 million in 1981. The number of passengers carried has more than doubled since the first 15 communities voted to create the PVTA. Members now number 23.

PVTA gains operating revenue from 4 major sources. Currently in round figures, operating funds are shared at 25% each from the farebox, UMTA, state government, and member communities.

With the enactment of new state laws and changing federal policies, PVTA faces a difficult road ahead.

Proposition 2½ limits the dollar amount that regional transit authorities can increase revenue from local and state governments to 4% of last years total. While operating costs continue to escalate, PVTA will only be able to increase those assessments by approximately $180,000 in Fiscal Year 1983, which begins this July. At the same time the federal government is proposing to reduce the amount of money they now provide by one-half. PVTA, therefore, projects a $1.7 million budget shortfall or loss of 17.5% of our estimated dollar requirement, based on the same level of service for FY 83 that is now being operated.

The ability to maintain status quo service with these severe budget restrictions presents a major and difficult problem. Continued economies and efficiencies will be required to keep transit service on the move for Pioneer Valley residents.

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New Officers/ New Directions

When she assumed the post of Board Chairman, Clarice Brows Thorp predicted a very tough year ahead as shrinking financial resources force a continuous scrutiny of the transit system. The Transit Authority's Advisory Board serves as the decision making body and is composed of a representative from each of the 23 member cities and towns.

Thorp is currently serving her second, three-year term on the Pelham Board of Selectmen. A resident of Pelham since 1952, Mrs. Thorp is an attorney and practiced law in New York for several years.

Looking toward the coming year, the new Advisory Board Chairman will strive toward gaining more active involvement from community representatives to the

(continued on page 2)

... New Officers

PVTA. "Good management will require active participation and active membership is an opportunity for a community to have a say about a material, tangible part of their services". Mrs. Thorp will also strive to find more economical ways of operating the transit system. "The public requests more and more service, yet there just isn't the money to produce it. It's a very tough situation."

She has extensive experience with the PVTA, serving as Vice-Chairman last year and as Chairman of the Facility Committee and Personnel Committee in past years.

Michael Laverdiere has assumed the post of Vice-Chairman. A Holyoke native, he has been with the Planning Department for six years and is a Principal Planner. Laverdiere is a graduate of U.Mass. School of Business Administration with a degree in urban and regional management.

Reflecting Mrs. Thorp's view, he looks toward "keeping as much service on the streets as possible, providing quality service for the lowest dollar amount." Laverdiere has set a goal for the PVTA of becoming more aggressive in its campaign to attract new riders. "The transit service is a good, clean, easy-to-use method of transportation and cheap, too! We need to get that message out."

Charlene Grimaldi, Executive Assistant to the PVTA, was elected Clerk for the seventh consecutive year. Mrs. Grimaldi has been with the PVTA since its inception, complimenting the slate of officers with her in-depth knowledge of the system.

Fifth Grant Award

Funds awarded by UMTA to the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority have made it possible for this system to continue its efforts toward increased efficiency. The $2.9 million grant was announced in September by U.S. Congressman Edward Boland, D-Massachusetts, 2nd District. The grant has been used for purchasing the region's largest bus garage and will also buy new equipment.

PVTA has purchased the Springfield bus garage which now houses 102 of the region's 202 bus fleet. The remaining vehicles are located in four other facilities in the 23-community region. A tentative agreement, reached three months ago, set the purchase price at $1.65 million for the garage and its inventory.

Capital will be invested in the aging building to increase its energy efficiency and to improve operations. PVTA looks toward spending capital grant money for improvements which will decrease escalating operating expenses.

Of the remaining amount in the $2.9 million grant approximately $14,500 will be used for the purchase of Bus Stop and Park and Ride Signs.

Grant monies will also be put toward purchasing new fareboxes and coin-counting and sorting machines. This equipment will help insure the security of revenue collected and reduce the cost of revenue counting.

Eight vans and four mini-buses with a total price tag of $300,000 will be purchased to replace aging vehicles on lightly used runs and to provide new specialized services. Five of the vans are to be replacements.

The mini-buses will go into service in the Springfield, Chicopee and Holyoke area. The mini-buses are larger than the vans currently in use which accommodate only two riders in wheelchairs. It is anticipated that the new vans and mini-buses will provide better transportation services for people unable to use conventional transit.

This Fiscal Year 1981 Capital Improvement Grant is the fifth consecutive grant awarded yearly to the PVTA. The Federal government will pay 80% of the total amount with local and State governments paying the other 10% each.

James Wilcox, former Superintendent of Transportation for the Springfield Street Railway Co., now holding the same position with Springfield Transit Management, Inc. turns property deed over to Clarice Thorp, during an outdoor ceremony on a beautiful November day.

Grumman Flxible Corporation, through dedicated and hard work, has solved the bus design problems experienced in the past. WATCH for them this summer...when 21 new Flxible buses are added to PVTA's fleet.

New Management

In October of this year, PVTA entered into a contract with Springfield Transit Management, Inc. to manage the transit service in the Springfield area. The Authority believes this contract to be unique and beneficial to the transit district since the management company is a corporate venture of three current transit providers in the area.

The stockholders and officers of the corporation are: Paul Gardell, President of Longueil Transportation, Inc.; Peter Picknelly, President of Peter Pan Bus Lines, Inc.; and John Herlihy, President of Western Mass. Bus Lines, Inc.

The selection process consisted of a pre-proposal meeting, attended by five transit management firms, submission of formal proposals, interviews by the alternative management selection committee, a committee of the Board, and approval of the full Advisory Board. Springfield Transit Management, Inc. submitted the lowest price and best proposal and also was rated best at the interview session.

Paper Money Presents Problem

Tickets, paper money or dollar bills cause an inefficiency in the operation of our transit system that the PVTA wants to correct. The Transit Authority has recently been taking a long, hard look at itself to track down ways to reduce costs. With operating money becoming scarce, routes and trips with low ridership have been forced to change as transit officials strive to provide convenient service for the greatest number of people.

Consider the collection of fares.Revenue from passenger fares now account for ¼ of PVTA's operating costs.More than 50,000 passengers per day deposit money into the farebox or use a PVTA commuter pass. Fares follow a path from your hand, into the farebox then on to mechanized coin counters...unless you deposit a dollar bill or ticket. Then a crumbled, folded bill goes to a person who must spend time unfolding, counting and wrapping the money while the tickets must be sorted, counted and shredded.

This time, approximately five hours per day across the transit system, translates into an administrative expense. Transit riders themselves can help improve efficiency and keep more money dedicated to street service where it is needed by having exact fare in change for each person boarding. What we're asking is that each rider make an effort to carry coins so that each fare deposited in change can eliminate dollar bills for the benefit of all transit users.

55¢ Tokens will soon be available. Watch for details early in the new year.

From the Administrator's Desk

When the Advisory Board began deliberations about the 1980 budget nearly 2 years ago, some difficult decisions were made. In July of that year, it became necessary to reduce service miles as costs far outweighed revenue, and transit funding began to decline. Effective in August of 1980, an increase in fares was also required. On August 1, fares jumped up from 40¢ to the current 55¢. Ridership started to decline.

It was in that same month and year that the Advisory Board supported my appointment as PVTA's third Administrator. The future was guaranteed to be a difficult one. Since that time, however, many changes have occurred, some of which are:

- PVTA, through cooperative agreements, acquired the Springfield bus garage with the end result of substantial savings of operating expenses.
- A study of the fare structure was initiated to simplify the system, making it easier to use PVTA.
- The transfer policy study was started to improve the policy and make it easier to understand.
- PVTA moved its general offices to new headquarters in the middle of the action. We can have closer contact with the public and promote ridership from our new location on Main Street in Springfield.
- Our program to increase transit use by commuters through participation of employers in the monthly pass program was started.
- PVTA acquired 15 General Motors Corporation RTS II Advanced Design Buses.
- PVTA ordered 21 Grumman Flxible Corporation 870 40 foot Advanced Design Buses which will arrive in Fiscal Year 1982. Eight will be delivered to Western Mass Bus Lines, four to UMass Transit Service and nine to Springfield Transit Management.
- Mary Commisso was hired as PVTA's Telephone Information Center Supervisor, with a resultant decrease in staff hours and increase in number of calls handled.
- Pat Sweitzer was brought on board as a part-time Public Affairs Coordinator, working under a contract with the Lower Pioneer Valley Regional Planning Commission.
- Operational efficiencies have been effectuated that will reduce operating expenses, a necessity for maintaining a strong transit system.

The year ahead will, no doubt, present new challenges for the PVTA. Creative and effective solutions will be a high priority as we strive to meet the transportation needs of people in the Pioneer Valley.

I wish you all a Happy Holiday and bright New Year.

Bob Manz

Bob Manz

We've Moved To

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is now easier to find in its new downtown Springfield location. PVTA is located on the second floor of Marketplace, the office and retail complex now being renovated. Passersby will easily recognize the new office by the arched windows facing Main Street across from One Financial Plaza.

A prominent downtown location was sought by PVTA to make the office more accessible to the public. The move also consolidated PVTA's offices. Previously the administrative staff and information center were in separate locations.

Monthly bus passes and transit schedules are available in the Marketplace office, where PVTA's staff of four Information Specialists can help citizens travel throughout the Pioneer Valley by bus.

The PVTA invites people to stop in and visit the new facility at 1365 Main Street.

A Clear View

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority began its passenger shelter program four years ago with the installation of approximately 80 shelters. These facilities, constructed of aluminum supports and clear panels, were strategically placed in high use areas. To determine shelter location, possible sites are suggested by local communities and operators. Places with a high volume of passengers including hospitals, shopping centers, schools or downtown areas are also considered as well as locations with little available protection from inclement weather. Shelters may be placed near housing complexes to accommodate the large number of people living there.

When the PVTA began installing passenger shelters, panels were constructed of lexan, a polycarbonate. Over the years, this material has become clouded or hazed as can readily be seen in many shelters. The PVTA, now proudly supporting over 120 shelters, has recognized problems with many of its shelters. Other material including lucite and tempered glass has been used, all of which have both good features and drawbacks. Some require constant cleaning, others are prone to scratching through wear.

To improve the look of shelters, PVTA will install a new shelter material, MARGARD, manufactured by General Electric. Under test conditions, performed by GE, MARGARD has proven to have the same quality of strength found in Lexan. Its prime new characteristic, is that it stands up to abrasion. Laboratory test methods used by the manufacturer simulated washing methods, an identified cause of abrasion. GE has also conducted tests on MARGARD's resistance to the natural effects of weather.

Mrs. Clarice Thorp, Advisory Board Chairman summed up the new shelter program: "We have a first-class operation with a beautiful piece of equipment on the road in our advanced design buses, and shelters provide an added convenience for passengers. We want them to reflect the quality of our service."

MARGARD was installed in one of Springfield's passenger shelters early this fall to compare its quality with the existing panel material.

Fair Fares

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is taking an in-depth look at the way fares are structured this year through a study to investigate everything which affects the prices that patrons pay for a bus ride. All fare-related policies and actual practices will be investigated to determine if there are inefficiencies in the system and methods for setting up a more equitable fare structure if warranted.

Under present arrangements, the PVTA has adopted policies which set the base fare of 55¢, rides for elderly and handicapped persons at 25¢ and 40¢ for student fares. Passengers who travel longer distances are required to pay an additional zone charge.

Many of the fare policies now in operation are carried over from the years when transit service was not under the PVTA umbrella. The aim of the fare structure study will be to create acceptable policies across the entire district. A change in the fare policies does not necessarily mean a fare increase. The goal of the study is to create a uniform system that is easily understood by transit patrons and potential riders. In order to achieve that, research will be conducted on trip patterns and passenger preferences, the efficiencies of current operations, the existing and projected financial picture, and the costs associated with making a specific trip using a competing method of transportation. The study is being done by the Lower Pioneer Valley Regional Planning Commission under contract to the PVTA.

A special subcommittee of the PVTA Board has been set up to guide the study progress. The public will be invited to comment throughout the process as information becomes available.

Seasons Greetings

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The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

In Transit

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Our Financial Problem Deepens

The budget period PVTA is currently operating under is Fiscal Year 1982, a year which began July 1, 1981 and ends June 30, 1982. The total estimated budget, based upon operating costs provided by each carrier, is $9.1 million. The costs of running buses as described in Issue #1 of IN TRANSIT, are made up of federal, state and local dollars and farebox revenues.

In February of 1981, the Transit Authority estimated its state and local funding level for this year to be $6,379,000. When PVTA's audit was completed in October of 1981 by the firm of Deloitte, Haskins and Sells, the state and local subsidy level was established at $5,698,000. This was $681,000 less than anticipated.

This shortfall or budget gap was made up for by: 1) using monies from the '82 budget contingency fund, 2) transferring 1979 unused federal funds, and 3) savings realized among carriers on the cost of operating transit.

In December of 1981, six months into PVTA's fiscal year, Congress passed a revised transit bill which reduces our federal assistance by $364,000. PVTA has sought ways to close this new gap with funds from insurance premium returns and by using state and local assessments earmarked for capital principal and interest payments for operating assistance.

Unfortunately, this still leaves a gap of between $50,000 and $100,000. Further, in Fiscal Year 1983, beginning in July, PVTA will lose $950,000 more in federal operating assistance. Proposition 2½ will limit state and local funding increases to 2½% of what they were last year which will create an additional funding gap of $460,000.

Some of the measures used to close the gap between expenses and the money available to pay for them this year were one time measures and will not be available in FY '83. Next year's shortfall is projected at $1.8 million.

Get Yourself an Economy Card

Saving money is easy for people who ride with PVTA. For people who take their cars to work everyday and pay to park, transit can save over 70% of the cost to commute. Using a PVTA monthly pass results in even greater savings since every trip over 18 is free!

This month, PVTA will kick-off a new campaign appropriately dubbed "Get Yourself an Economy Card". PVTA hopes to boost the use of our monthly pass and make more frequent riders out of those who may want to take advantage of the cost savings. Approximately 1,350 people use the monthly pass now. Watch for signs on the buses with our new slogan which will appear during the week of February 15.

In conjunction with this, we will be asking employers who are served by transit to encourage their employees to use the bus. PVTA hopes that employers would offer an incentive to their personnel by helping to pay the cost of a monthly commuter pass, similar to helping employees pay for parking. Mayor Dimauro of Springfield and the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce recently lent their support to this program and we're sure other communities will as well.

Basically, the employer pass program works like this: Any business or industry within PVTA's region would agree to sell bus passes to its employees. PVTA asks that the employer subsidize a portion of the pass cost although that is not entirely necessary. An employer subsidy of 25% is suggested.

PVTA's standard pass sells for $20.00 - making a monthly commuting cost just $15.00 for a person employed by a participating company. We hope that this will encourage people to make better use of public transportation particularly for commuting.

When only 25% of our total budget comes from the farebox, the need to increase ridership is readily evident.

What is a Subsidy Agreement ?

A subsidy agreement outlines: the service the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority wishes to have the carrier perform during the contract year, the method of compensation, terms of the agreement and the budget amount.

Each year, PVTA negotiated a subsidy agreement with six private and public bus operators. These were Longueil Transportation, Inc., Peter Pan Bus Lines, Western Mass Bus Lines, U Mass Transit Service, Springfield Street Railway Company, and Holyoke Street Railway Company.

In June of 1981, an agreement with Springfield Street Railway Company was not executed and the existing agreement was extended until SSRC ceased operations and Springfield Transit Management, Inc. took over. There is presently no subsidy agreement with STM.

In addition to the six carriers operating regular route bus service, PVTA has entered into contracts with organizations providing specialized transportation. These contracts expire on a yearly basis and are renewed at the beginning of each fiscal year. Currently, PVTA has twenty such agreements in 19 communities within the region. Social service agencies and in some cases, transit operators provide this service.

Subsidy Agreements and Labor Contracts

In Massachusetts, transit legislation was designed to keep the private bus companies intact. Regional transit authorities were to provide a vehicle for funding and to act as a regulatory agency. The establishment of RTA's made it possible to keep buses on the road through the assistance of tax dollars.

Private carriers then, maintained the responsibility for all issues related to labor agreements. Three of PVTA's subsidized carriers have labor agreements through the Amalgamated Transit Union including Holyoke Street Railway Company, Peter Pan and Springfield Transit Management. Each labor agreement has individual characteristics as negotiated by the company.

In Springfield, the contract negotiated by the Springfield Street Railway Company, and now honored by STM for drivers and maintenance employees, expires on June 30, 1982. HSRC, has negotiated an agreement which will expire in February of this year. Longueil Transportation, Inc. operates under a Memorandum of Understanding with its personnel with the most recent agreement covering a period from January 1979 to December 1981. These agreements will be renegotiated by each employer.

PVTA is prohibited from playing a direct role in transit operations. However, as federal funds shrink and state and local funds are capped, the amount of money available to operate transit is reduced and reflected in the budgets PVTA is able to provide to carriers. It is PVTA's responsibility to provide the best transit program within available funding limits and applicable law.

What is 13(c)?

Section 13(c) of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended ("Act"), states essentially that fair and equitable arrangements shall be made to protect the interests of employees affected by assistance from the Federal government pursuant to the terms of the Act. Section 8(k) of Chapter 161B of the General Laws of Massachusetts provides that the employee protective arrangements of the Act shall apply also as a condition of any assistance from the Commonwealth to a private carrier under an arrangement with a Transit Authority.

The key words are"affected by assistance." If the assistance itself does not affect the employee, Section 13(c) does not become operative, nor does Section 8(k). For instance, members of Local 448 were not "affected" by the grant of funds for the purchase of the real estate of Springfield Street Railway Company. The money obtained from the governmental sources which was used to purchase such real estate did not cause such workers to be displaced or dismissed. If, however, assistance funds were obtained to purchase, for instance, an automatic bus washing machine, resulting in four such members losing their job, those employees would have been "affected" by the assistance, causing the provisions of Section 13(c) to become operative.

Finally, there is a distinction between an employee's being displaced or dismissed or otherwise "affected" by assistance, and being "affected" by a lack of assistance. In the former case, the provisions of Section 13(c) and Section 8(k) apply; in the latter case, they do not. If workers must be laid off or terminated because of a decrease of governmental funds, they are obviously not "affected" by assistance from the Federal and State governments; they are "affected" because there is not sufficient assistance to keep them employed.

MAS. Y3. PVTA1: 3/3

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

InTransit

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CHANGES TO HOLYOKE BUS SERVICE PROPOSED

Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is considering a proposal to change bus routes in Holyoke. Transit service operated by the Holyoke Street Railway Company in the city, with connecting service to South Hadley, Chicopee, Springfield, West Springfield, and Westfield has been the subject of an in-depth study conducted by the Lower Pioneer Valley Regional Planning Commission.

The recommendations from the study call for combining routes to reduce overall bus mileage and operating costs, while providing the same level of service to the public. The study cites that a large number of routes duplicate each other in the city, therefore spreading the number of riders over many routes instead of having people use one bus. On some streets, say the findings, as many as four bus routes travel on one road.

According to the plan, there would be no major changes in the areas of Holyoke that are served by transit and no reduction in the frequency of bus service. In some instances, service would be increased. "The entire proposal," says PVTA Administrator Robert Manz, "represents a modernization of the Holyoke bus system to take into account new development and population changes, and changes in ridership of recent years." The proposal combines bus routes and schedules so that more routes will meet in downtown Holyoke at the same time for easier transferring between buses. Other routes have been linked to enable more riders to reach major crosstown destinations without having to change buses.

The study indicated that the 15 routes operated by the Holyoke Street Railway Company can be combined into a total of 13 with the same level of service. The only exception is Jarvis Avenue from Old Jarvis Avenue to Easthampton Road and Easthampton Road from Jarvis to Interstate 91. PVTA would no longer support service in this area due to the low density of housing and lack of ridership there. Passengers using buses on Hillside Avenue between Belvedere and Beech now served by Route 213 and on the sections of Brown, Laurel, Elmwood, Martin, and Westfield streets served by Route 203, will be able to use new routes traveling within one block of these roads.

Remaining unchanged in the proposed new route structure are Routes 206, Fairview/Fairfield Mall; 207, Granby Center; 111/217, Holyoke/Springfield via Riverdale, and 221, Holyoke/Springfield via Chicopee Center. If the proposal is accepted, Route 208, Westfield/Hampton Ponds will go to the Holyoke Soldiers Home instead of Route 209, the Jarvis Avenue bus.

(continued on page 2)

AND THE WINNERS ARE . . .

The Roadeo winners (l-r) are Truman Easton, Ronald Benoit, Charles Osgood, Jeremy Rogers, and Steve Pause.

Thirty-eight bronco-busing transit drivers competed in PVTA's first annual Bus Roadeo held in September. For artfully winding their way through an obstacle course, discovering defects in an RTS II, and expounding knowledge of safety practices, all competitors deserve a "well done!"

At stake were prizes and a chance to pit street skill against a nationally certified driving course. The top five drivers were awarded trophies and cash prizes ranging from $250 for first place to $25 for fifth. PVTA saluted winners at the October meeting of the Advisory Board.

The "toughest maneuver," says winner Charles Osgood, "was the serpentine," an S-shaped curve formed by traffic cones. Operators tried skillfully to wind their 35' vehicle through without touching a single cone. Just tapping a cone caused valuable points to be deducted and under the watchful eyes of police officers from throughout the valley, not one nicked cone went unnoticed.

Osgood placing first, scored a total of 643 points out of a possible 850. A resident of Amherst, he's been driving for UMass Transit Service, Inc. since 1975. The first prize also included an all-expense paid trip to compete in the National Roadeo sponsored by the American Public Transit Association.

Placing a close second with 641 points was Jeremy Rogers. He, too, drives for UMass. Rogers represented PVTA at the National Roadeo scoring in the top third among 60 professional drivers from across the country. OUR CONGRATULATIONS!

Steve Pause drove away with third place after earning 626 points. He's been operating transit vehicles for UMass since 1977.

Springfield Transit Management, Inc. drivers captured fourth and fifth place. Ronald Benoit has been driving buses for nine years and gathered 603 points for the day. Truman Easton started driving city buses in 1965, placing among the top five drivers in the region with a score of 588 points.

PVTA dedicates this newsletter to all of its professional drivers and to the Roadeo committee who made the day a success.

...HOLYOKE SERVICE

Routes which will be eliminated by absorbing their service area and schedules into the new route network are 213, West Dwight/Hillside and 214, Highlands/West Dwight. These are proposed for consolidation with Route 209 and 215 respectively

Route 202, Fairfield Mall via Chicopee Falls would be combined with a revised Route 209, Jarvis Avenue to give passengers access to the Fairfield Mall, Chicopee Falls, and Holyoke Community College without having to change buses. The entire schedule would operate on half hour intervals. Route 209 now has hourly service.

Route 204, Elmwood/Oakdale/Whiting Farms would be combined with Route 210, Essex/Appleton St. The Essex, Pleasant, Northampton, Hampden, and Appleton Street loop of Route 210 will connect with Route 204. Route 204 will travel the same roads as present, except that buses will pull into the main entrance of the Holyoke Hospital. The change would give residents of the Essex-Appleton area direct access to the Holyoke Mall at Ingleside without transferring. Service would remain at hourly intervals.

A proposed new Route 205-214/215 would serve the Highlands area via Lincoln, Northampton, Dartmouth and Nonotuck Streets. Buses would travel on Lyman and Father Kolbe Drive to downtown. Buses would then follow the current 205, Oakdale-Whitings Farm route, giving passengers on all trips the opportunity to ride all the way to the Holyoke Mall without changing buses. Service on this route also remains at hourly intervals.

A combination of Route 211, South Hadley Center and 212, South Hadley Falls, via Downtown Holyoke would maintain hourly service to these areas.

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority and the Lower Pioneer Valley Regional Planning Commission described the proposal in detail at public hearings on Wednesday, October 27.

After reviewing the entire proposal and public comments, the PVTA Advisory Board will consider the plan for adoption at its regular meeting in November. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

BIG E NEWS!

For the first time in three years, there was an increase in the number of people riding with PVTA to this year's Big E. Springfield Transit Management, Inc. operated daily Shuttle service to the fairgrounds leaving Baystate West every 20 minutes. Longueil Transportation, Inc. ran half-hour Express buses from the Eastfield Mall on Saturdays and Sundays.

A total of 18,197 people used the service with an overall increase of 1,675 passengers. Our greatest increase was in the Express service showing 1,323 more passengers than in 1981.

Without assistance from the management of the Eastern States Exposition, Baystate West, and Eastfield Mall, along with the competence of transit operators, Big E bus service would not have enjoyed its 1982 success. THANKS!

August 19, 1982 STATEMENT OF PETER PICKNELLY, PRESIDENT, STM, Inc.

Springfield Transit Management is the successor of the former Springfield Street Railway Company. All service is operated under contract with the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, where federal, state and city taxes subsidize the service.

When Springfield Transit Management was awarded the management contract of the local transit company by the PVTA, the Company took over all of the former employees of the Springfield Street Railway, and the Union contract which expired June 30, 1982. The management of STM recognizes it's responsibility to manage the company efficiently, and to provide the highest level of service possible; understanding that substantial cutbacks are expected in operating subsidy money from government.

PVTA also contracts with other bus companies in the Pioneer Valley area. The following is a comparison of the labor rate paid by all of the other companies, as compared to the labor rate paid to STM employees.

HOURLY RATES

COMPANY	DRIVER	MECHANIC	CLEANER
Springfield Transit	$9.77	$10.03	$9.57
Holyoke Street Railway Co	$6.93	$ 7.47	$6.80
Longueil Trans., Inc	$5.95	$ 7.30	$4.50
Western Mass Bus Lines	$5.40	$ 6.75	$4.25
Springfield/ Agawam Bus Lines	$5.40	$ 6.75	$4.25
UMass Transit Service	$4.86	$ 9.13	$4.86
Peter Pan Bus Lines	$6.68	$ 8.74	$5.95

In addition to the substantial disparity in labor rates as illustrated above, the work rules at STM, both as it relates to drivers and garage work rules, prevent the Company from operating efficiently, and substantial amounts of money are wasted because of "featherbedding" provisions in the contract.

Because of the cutback in government subsidy, in recent negotiations with the Union, the Company attempted to initiate work rule changes that would allow the Company to function more efficiently. The Union has publicly termed the recent negotiations as "a farce." Basically, the Company agrees. There was a total of thirteen (13) meetings with the Union, over a six-week period of time; with the only consistent response of the Union being the word, "No."

Mr. Gonzales was quoted in the Daily News on August 18 as saying, "STM also cut wages of maintenance workers by $2.25 per hour as of August 1." The truth of the matter is that mechanics' wage rates were not reduced. The wage rate of six bus cleaners only were reduced. What Mr. Gonzales is not saying is that these bus cleaners were receiving $9.57 per hour to sweep the bus floor, clean the windows, and drive the bus through the automatic washing machine. The management of STM feels that the public who use STM's service would be incensed if they knew that the bus that they are riding in to get to and from their jobs that might pay them $4.00 or $5.00 per hour, was being cleaned periodically by a bus cleaner who was being paid by their tax dollars $9.57 per hour to clean the bus

During the school year, the Company operates approximately thirty "Tripper Buses" in the morning and again in the afternoon, for the primary purpose of transporting school children back and forth to school. Under the present Union contract, the driver is being paid the equivalent of double-time to operate these tripper runs. The public should understand that under the present contract, school children who are riding on these tripper buses at reduced fares are being driven to and from school by a bus driver earning almost $20.00 an hour, and that their tax dollars are paying that wage. STM attempted to negotiate the use of part-time drivers to provide these "Tripper Runs." The Union's response was "No."

Mr. Gonzales' statement in the newspaper on August 18 as it relates to benefits for retirees and their dependents being terminated was an unfair representation. All retired employees receive pension benefits similiar to most all workers who retire; and these benefits will continue. The difference is, that by Union contract, STM retirees were also receiving as an additional benefit, paid-up life insurance, which they will obviously someday collect. The premium for providing this insurance for retirees (by the taxpayer), was just too expensive to retain. Also, these retirees, similiar to most retirees, receive health insurance supported by the government; such as Medicare or Medex. The retirees will continue to receive their Medicare or Medex; however, the Company will no longer pay the additional cost of the Medicare or Medex that most all other retirees normally pay themselves. Had the Company during negotiations been able to successfully negotiate the elimination of featherbedding; implemented part-time drivers & work rule changes, the position of the Company on benefits for retirees could have been different.

During negotiations, the Company was faced with an increase in health insurance costs for employees that would cost the Company substantially more than $100,000.00. Money simply isn't available to pay the increase. The Company attempted to negotiate with the Union a health plan with slightly less benefits, or the right to negotiate with other insurance companies for similiar coverage through competitive bidding. Again, the Union said "No." Faced with that answer, the Company takes the position that the only plan acceptable to the Union is the present plan; then Union members will have to pay the increase. During the last three-year contract, which expired June 30, 1982, negotiated by previous management during the days when government funding for transit seemed limitless, the Union negotiated wage increases over the three years that amounted to approximately forty (40%) percent increases. Times have now changed. Just the reverse is true, government funding is being cut back to levels that are expected to be substantially less than prior years. The Company can no longer afford to waste tax dollars. The Union is being totally unrealistic when they request future increases and cost of living benefits. The Company has offered to retain the present wage unchanged (except for the bus cleaners) for a one-year contract, together with work rule changes that eliminate featherbedding. The position of the Union that they want further wage increases and cost of living benefits is just unrealistic.

NO DOLLAR BILLS PLEASE

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority announced in September that dollar bills would no longer be accepted into the farebox, and that all riders must show their monthly passes and special fare cards to the driver. Dollar bills end up costing PVTA money because crumpled, folded bills have to be sorted, unfolded, counted, and bundled by hand. Coins and tokens are counted mechanically.

So PVTA asked that all passengers pay for riding with exact fare, PVTA's new tokens or a monthly bus pass. Tokens are now sold at Third National Banks, while passes are available at BayBank Valley, Old Colony Bank, Northampton Co-Operative, Freedom Federal Savings, Shawmut First Bank, and at the Springfield Golden Age Club. Passes and tokens can also be purchased at the PVTA office in the MarketPlace, Springfield Transit Management, Inc. and the Holyoke Street Railway Company.

To eliminate questions raised by passengers when some riders board, PVTA asked drivers to require all holders to show their pass when boarding and if applicable, their half-fare identification card. People over 60 years of age and handicapped persons can ride for half-fare if they show a transit identification card available at the Springfield Golden Age Club and the Holyoke Council on Aging. That card entitles the bearer to pay half-fare or buy a half-fare monthly bus pass.

Thanks To You
It Works!

Dollar Bills Down 75%

PVTA COMMENDS DRIVER

When an explosion in the transformer room of a local industry occurred, William "Bob" Hallums, an STM, Inc. operator, was laid over on a nearby street. He saw two men running from the building, their clothing on fire, and grabbed his fire equipment, ran from the bus, and extinguished the flames.

Clarice Brows Thorp, past Chairman of PVTA's Advisory Board, presented a plaque to the operator inscribed with the words "Certificate of Appreciation Presented to William L. Hallums in Recognition of Your Exemplary Action on April 9, 1982 For Outstanding and Dedicated Service." Mrs. Thorp noted that "his response was brave and good and kind, and we're glad to have him as one of our capable drivers."

As a transit driver, Hallums participated in ongoing safety programs coordinated by William McCullough, STM, Inc. Safety Supervisor. Driver training covers such topics as emergency procedures, defensive driving, and accident prevention. McCullough feels that "this training, along with Bob's quick-thinking was put to good use when the accident occurred. Although we sincerely regret that tragedies like this happen, we're proud of Bob's efforts to help."

Bob Hallums is congratulated by STM, Inc. Safety Supervisor McCullough as Mrs. Thorp leads PVTA's Advisory Board in applause.

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR'S DESK

Representatives of STM and Local 448 met for the first time on May 17, 1982 to negotiate a new contract. This process continued until July 27, 1982 when impasse was reached. STM then implemented its final offer to Local 448. The main elements of such offer were the following: a one year contract at no increase in wages and a reduction in wages for garage utility personnel; curtailment of retirees' life and health insurance paid by STM; no increase in STM's share of employees' health insurance costs; spread time to be twelve hours; work day to be nine hours.

To date, I would estimate that the amount of money spent by both sides in negotiation and legal matters would probably have paid for the retirees' medical costs. In all likelihood, if the legal process runs its course, an amount sufficient to pay the employees' health insurance will also be spent.

What happens if the judicial tribunal rules that STM does not have to engage in interest arbitration? A contract is still needed and the parties need to come to an agreement, all the while understanding that the PVTA will have less money available in FY '83 than was available in FY '82.

What are the PVTA's options if the judicial tribunal rules that STM must enter into interest arbitration?

1. STM can proceed to arbitration with the approval of the PVTA. It is unlikely that the staff of the PVTA would recommend such a course.

2. STM can proceed to arbitration without the approval of the PVTA. STM would then not have a contract with the PVTA.

3. The PVTA could contract a substantial portion of the services presently being managed by STM to other current contractors, upon whom an arbitration award would have no effect.

4. The PVTA could cease supporting the services presently being operated by STM, possibly, some other governmental agency might replace the PVTA in providing such service.

The bottom line is that the PVTA cannot, in FY '83, afford to meet the Union's demands and still maintain the present levels of service in the Pioneer Valley. It should also be kept in mind that future increases will have to be funded without further loss of service.

The PVTA cannot proceed on a course whereby arbitrators would dictate the terms of its contracts and determine the transit services to be provided by the PVTA. In view of the present state of affairs, it appears that the only reasonable course is to agree to an affordable contract, any other course is detrimental to the employees, the passengers, the taxpayer and to the PVTA.

Considering this brief, uncomplicated analysis, management stands willing to negotiate a resolution of the health insurance benefit and execute a contract. By doing so, together we can proceed to build a stronger system which will hopefully result in continued benefits for all concerned in the years to come.

Robert D. Manz
Administrator

PASSENGER TRANSPORT REPORTS

DENVER STRIKE ENDS, BUSES ROLL AGAIN

Denver, Colo — Less than 48 hours after the Regional Transportation District Board and members of the Amalgamated Transit Union ratified a new contract, buses were back on the streets, operating at 100% service levels.

"The situation looks good," said RTD spokeswoman Kathy Joyce, explaining that within hours after the settlement was reached Saturday, Aug 7, mechanics were back on the job readying buses for Monday rush-hour service.

The contract settlement, up only 1 1% over the offer rejected by the unions July 12, includes a 13.6% increase in wages and benefits that will cost RTD $5.9 million over a three-year period The settlement also eliminates cost of living allowances, permits hiring of part-time bus drivers, freezes wages for clerical workers, allows lower wage rates for new employees in a number of positions, and expands the system's ability to subcontract maintenance work.

RTD Chairman Lowell R. Hutson, praising the spirit of compromise, said, "The contract serves the needs of our employees, the realities of the economy, and the constraints of sound fiscal management"

According to Joyce, transit officials were encouraged by the number of commuters using the system on the first day back in service

To encourage continued ridership, RTD is offering a 35¢ special fare for all service, including regional service which normally has a fare of $1.75. Other incentives include extending July monthly pass use through August and offering a pro-rated cash refund for those who do not wish to use their passes Fewer than 10% of the 20,000 pass holders have redeemed those passes.

"The cooperative and flexible attitude of the general public prevented the strike from doing permanent harm to mass transit in the region," added Hutson.

ALBANY WORKERS AGREE

Albany, N.Y. — In a labor agreement approved by a margin of 2½ to 1, transit workers in the Capitol District Transportation Authority system have settled on a new two year pact. The settlement eliminates cost of living increases in the first year of the contract life and calls for wage increases of 20 cents now and 10 cents at the start of the second year in October of 1983. During the second year, COLA increases of ,5 will be in place for a minimum 20¢ and maximum 36¢ increase, with an overall increase of 50¢ through the year and a maximum increase of 66¢. In September of 1984, the minimum top rate will be $9.71 with the maximum top wage at $9.87 per hour.

Third National Bank began selling tokens for PVTA in September. On-hand for kick-off ceremonies were (l-r) Michael Laverdiere, Advisory Board Chairman, Mayor Theodore Dimauro, City of Springfield, and Richard Driscoll, Senior Vice President, Third National Bank.

Roadeo Action...

THE GOALS OF NEW OFFICERS

With the beginning of the new fiscal year, Michael Laverdiere succeeded Clarice Brows Thorp as Chairman of PVTA's Advisory Board. Laverdiere, representing Holyoke, is a Principal Planner with the Holyoke Planning Board Frank A Hudgik, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen in the town of Granby was elected Vice-Chairman, with Charlene Dias, clerk.

In contemplating his year term as Chairman, Laverdiere expects that "difficult times will continue to be in store for public transit" PVTA has anticipated funding problems brought on by the constraints of Proposition 2½ and reduced federal operating assistance In FY '82, those problems resulted in a budget shortfall of $260,000 requiring reduced service on some lines

Despite the problems facing PVTA, Laverdiere is optimistic that the Authority will continue to provide excellent service to the region "We need to keep routes and schedules as convenient as possible, even in the face of limited resources, so that people will be attracted to public transit" If budget problems should occur, Laverdiere does not expect major changes to the system, but rather "some fine-tuning to be sure the service is provided where it is needed and will be utilized"

Vice-Chairman Hudgik echoed Laverdiere's desire to keep the transit system strong adding that "public transit benefits all segments of the community." Hudgik believes that "in order to insure a healthy and strong PVTA, ridership must be increased, and that marketing and community relations can help bring this about" He advocates the creation of a marketing department within PVTA similar to those found in other successful public transportation systems

With regard to capital improvements, Laverdiere hopes that PVTA will continue to make improvements that will result in a more efficient, cost effective operation These improvements include modernization of PVTA's Springfield garage and the purchase of smaller, more fuel efficient buses for routes where ridership does not justify the use of larger buses.

MASS. Y3. PVTA1: 3/4

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

InTransit

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

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March 1983

UMass Transit: A DECADE OF SERVICE

The idea was simple: Get people out of their cars and into the buses. Cut down on pollution, traffic and parking problems. Do that with a bold plan: increase the cost of school parking; restrict where cars can park; but most important, provide a student-run bus service that allows anyone and everyone to ride, on and off-campus, free of charge!

Could it work?

In its first year of operation, the University of Massachusetts Transit Service carried about 2,000 passengers a day, some 60 percent of the student population. It was a good start.

10 Years of Growth

But ten years after Feb. 12, 1973, the day when ten Twin Coaches invaded the sprawling campus, more than 24,000 passengers — mostly students, but also professors and residents of six communities — board the buses daily.

"We've come a long way since those days," said Bill Barrett, director of the University Transit Service.

Over 140 student employees — and seven full-time staff workers, operate a fleet of 36 buses over 12 routes. The service area includes not only the UMass campus, but also the Town of Amherst, South Hadley, Belchertown, Sunderland, South Deerfield and Granby.

The buses cover some 735,000 miles annually and carry 4.5 passengers per mile, an impressive figure for any transit system. Barrett said he expects UMass Transit will have carried a grand total of 30 million passengers by early spring.

The "No Fare Transit System," one of only a handful in the country, is financed using state and federal funds, as well as funding from the university. Under the plan, each student is required to pay a fee of $11 per semester.

In fiscal 1982, the Transit Service received a total of $791,525 in subsidies. Its total budget was approximately $1.36 million.

The system grew dramatically from its inception. Barrett, who began working there as an undergraduate student in 1973, credits UMass engineering professors Paul Shuldeiner and William Goss, as well as undergrad Robert Godding, with the brainstorming that helped them secure funding. Bill Perkins, currently the general manager of Springfield Transit Management, Inc., was also involved in the process. Perkins had been student director of the University's Transit Service prior to its changeover to a no fare system. With their help, the University received a federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration Demonstration Grant to buy the first buses in 1973.

In 1976, the Transit Service received a big boost when it began working under the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority. This enabled the University to expand and become eligible for state and federal operating assistance.

(continued on page 2)

PVTA: Budget Update

At the midpoint of fiscal 1983, difficult decisions made by the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's Advisory Board last year are beginning to show their merit.

In a report issued to the PVTA Board on February 9, member Clarice Brows Thorp detailed the financial status of PVTA over the first six months of FY '83. The record "surprisingly good in the face of many difficulties," said Mrs. Thorp, who chairs the Board's Finance Committee.

"Ridership has increased. Cost per passenger and cost per mile have decreased. Where service has been cut, fewer riders have been lost then would have resulted from any other option," she said.

Despite severe budget restraints, PVTA managed to hold down its cost and work under projected budget figures during the first half of the year, she said. Ridership increased from 5.4 million in the first six months of FY '82 to 5.6 million in FY '83.

(continued on page 2)

New Legislation: Its Impact on PVTA

It comes with mixed blessings, but one thing is certain. New federal transit legislation will have a significant impact on public transportation in the Greater Springfield area.

On the bright side, the law guarantees continued federal support over the next four years to the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's region-wide transit system.

But the landmark legislation, called the "Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982," places strict limitations on PVTA's operating assistance. The bill, signed into law Jan 6 by President Reagan, calls for a 10-percent cut in federal operating assistance this year, with no federal increases through 1986 See Table

PVTA's Federal Budget

	OPERATING	CAPITAL	TOTAL
FY '81	**$2.8 M**	**$1.0 M**	**$3.8 M**
FY '82	**$2.3 M**	**$ .9 M**	**$3.1 M**
FY '83	**$2.0 M**	**$1.6 M**	**$5.2 M**
FY '84	**$2.0 M**	**$2.8 M**	**$5.2 M**
FY '85	**$2.0 M**	**$3.5 M**	**$5.7 M**
FY '86	**$2.0 M**	**$3.8 M**	**$5.8 M**

While new federal legislation calls for an overall increase in funding for PVTA over the next 4 years, federal operating assistance will decrease.

While the law contains an important provision allowing the PVTA to make up the cutback by using federal money earmarked for capital improvements, that provision runs out in 1984. After that, the PVTA must continue to operate at 82.6 percent of its fiscal 1982 allocation.

Given that local assistance is restricted under Proposition 2½, and that state funding is uncertain, PVTA will be forced to hold down its operating expenses. This will have a direct impact on what the Authority can spend for fuel, maintenance and labor contracts.

PVTA officials, reacting to the new legislation, said they were happy the federal government will continue to subsidize mass transit. But PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz cautioned that the law will restrict the Authority's ability to meet cost increases.

In general, Manz said the law will provide ample funding for capital improvement projects, but will have a serious impact on PVTA's operating expenses.

Here are some of the effects of the new law:

Operating assistance: The law constitutes a victory for transit supporters, in that the Reagan Administration had proposed eliminating operating subsidies entirely. In the past, PVTA has received operating assistance under Section 5 of the federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration program. Under the new law, Section 5 will be phased out by the end of FY '83. Money that went there will be transferred into the new Section 9 Block Grant program. The Block Grant money will be distributed according to a complicated formula based on population, population density, and a new factor, bus revenue mile. Also for the first time, population and population density statistics will be based on 1980 census figures and not 1970 census figures as in the past.

Under terms of the law, the federal government will finance up to 50 percent of a regional transit authority's operating expenses, not to exceed more than 90 percent of its 1982 level. For the PVTA, this means a reduction in operating subsidies this year from $2.3 million to around $2 million. Support in FY '81 was $2.86 million. PVTA can make up the loss using federal capital improvement funds this year and next year. Afterward, the total amount of federal money used for operating assistance can not exceed $2 million. And there is a drawback.

Using the capital funds as a bailout is a costly maneuver. For every two dollars of federal capital funds used for operating assistance, the law requires that the PVTA turn in one dollar to the Department of Transportation.

Ironically, under the law, PVTA's total allotment will increase, if capital funds are counted. But PVTA's ability to use that money is severely limited, since it can only spend up to 90 percent of its 1982 operating assistance after FY '84.

Discretionary Capital Improvement Programs: The law calls for an important change in the federal share of money to be used for discretionary capital improvement projects, such as any new construction projects or bus purchases. The federal government's share of any new projects will be 75 percent, with 25 percent to be matched by the state and local communities. This means a typical $1 million capital improvement project will cost the state and local communities a total of $50,000 more than it would under the old formula which was 80/20. Money to finance discretionary funds will be derived from the new federal tax on gasoline.

Buy America: A stronger law has been enacted. The new law requires that 100 percent of steel, cement and manufactured products must be American, with only a few exceptions. The old law required "domestic preference" on projects totalling more than $500,000.

Editor's Note: The Reagan Administration is fighting for further cut-backs.

... Budget Update

"Putting all the picture together for the six months ending December 31, 1982, our net cost is below the amount we had budgeted by $351,470," she said Since the second half of FY '83 is more costly than the 1st half, PVTA expects to end up on budget or just ahead PVTA had budgeted $3,816,458 for the first half of FY '83. The fiscal 1983 budget was reduced by $308,922 from FY '82.

Contributing to the successful first half were tough decisions made by the Board For example, Mrs. Thorp said, the decision to reduce service in certain areas did not have an adverse impact, as some had anticipated The latest figures showed that overall ridership grew 4.1 percent, at a time when service mileage was reduced by nearly the same amount.

Another tough decision — that of increasing the school fare from 25 cents to 40 cents — helped increase fare-box revenues, along with increased ridership, by $90,440.

"Against this progress," Mrs. Thorp cautioned, "must be considered rising operating and administrative costs and reduced subsidies."

Economies have been made in the administrative operation in a variety of items, such as marketing and auditing services. In addition, a substantial reduction in insurance cost resulted from a good accident record and a more aggressive marketing effort by PVTA's insurance consultant and staff. Net subsidies for the first six months of FY '83 on the other hand, were reduced by $474,899, or 15 percent, reflecting a reduction in federal operating assistance.

Mrs. Thorp said that interest on borrowed money continues to cut into PVTA's total budget, accounting for $370,143, or about six percent of the budget. Nevertheless, she said, the cost was reduced by nearly $100,000 when compared to the last six months of fiscal 1982.

"Our great worry is about the future," she said. "We have already made painful adjustments to higher costs and reduced government assistance. If it becomes necessary to tighten our operations further, it can come only from higher fares or reduced service. That we must resist with all our strength."

... UMass Transit

Under the auspices of the PVTA, the University Transit Service was able to buy 28 diesel-powered buses in 1978 and build a $1.7 million maintenance and storage garage in 1979.

"There's no question, we've had an excellent rapport with the PVTA," Barrett said.

Although Barrett is modest when he talks about the University's system, he is not modest when he talks about the students who work there.

"The vast majority of the student drivers have been outstanding," Barrett said. Students are required to attend a special training program to attain a "Class 2" driver's license, necessary to drive a bus.

In its ten years of operation, the student drivers have compiled a near flawless record There have been no on-board injuries, and their safety record compares favorably with any transit system in the country.

"It's a great job for a college student," said Paul Blanchard, a UMass freshman who works as UTS's Assistant Operations Manager.

Blanchard commented that most of his colleagues enjoy their work and speak with pride of driving buses and serving the community.

"I guess what's most impressive," Barrett said, "is that a student-run transit service has lasted ten years and has been such a success."

Contract Talks Stalled

Contract negotiations between representatives of Local 448 of the Amalgamated Transit Union and Springfield Transit Management, Inc. remain at an impasse, despite a final offer made in January by STM.

According to Local 448 business agent Vincent Gonzalez, union members voted January 19 to reject management's final offer for the following reasons:

1. The offer called for a change in health insurance companies, from Blue Cross/Blue Shield to Mahoney Insurance Co., Gonzalez said the 50 union members who attended the meeting were not satisfied coverage would remain the same after the change is made.

"Due to the fact that the proposal hinged upon our accepting Mahoney Insurance, the membership didn't want to go along with it (the offer)" Gonzalez explained.

2. Local 448 wants life insurance benefits for retirees restored, according to Gonzalez. The benefits were eliminated by STM last October.

3. Local 448 is willing to negotiate the salary of utility workers, Gonzalez said. STM reduced the salary of six bus cleaners from $9.57 an hour to $7.32 last July.

4. A crucial point in negotiations, Gonzalez said, concerns a 14-cent per hour cost-of-living increase. Union members want the increase retroactive to last July. STM has offered to grant the increase beginning in February, he said.

Gonzalez charged that STM has "unfairly" compared union wages to non-union wages. Local 448 bus drivers, under terms of the three-year contract with the former Springfield Street Railway Co., earn $9.77 an hour. Holyoke Street Railway drivers earn $7.33 an hour, while Longueil Transportation, Inc. drivers earn $5.95 an hour.

The comparison between union and non-union wages is not justified," he said. "Over the years, we have worked toward this goal. Even though (past contracts) have been called 'sweetheart deals,' we have in the past (prior to PVTA under Mayor Frank Freedman's Administration) put a cap on our cost-of-living increases. Our take-home wages now are less than they were a year ago," he added, noting that an increased charge in medical coverage contributed for the lower pay.

From The Administrator's Desk

On January 19, the members of ATU Local 448 voted down the proposal made by STM for a new two year labor agreement. The main points of the STM proposals were: The exact same benefits as currently provided by Blue Cross/Blue Shield to be provided by another insurance firm for both current employees and retired employees on a 80/20 split; full cost of living for the two year term of the contract, with the July '82 payment to be paid when the agreement is signed; the Jan. '83 payment in July '83 and the July '83 and Jan. '84 payments to be paid when due; reorganization of the maintenance department with no loss in pay from the current pay.

When this proposal was made, I was concerned that it might be too costly and lead to layoffs and reduction in service which the PVTA Advisory Board has stated that it was against. The legislation, signed into law January 6, 1983, would allow PVTA level funding for operating assistance for the years ending 6/83 and 6/84 with a 17.4% reduction for the years ending 6/85 and 6/86. The reduction amounts to more than $400,000.00. Planning to maintain our present level of employment and service miles over the four year transportation legislation was difficult at best. But then the President submitted his budget for FY '84 (Oct. '83 to Sept. '84) and asked that transit operating assistance be reduced from $2.3M to $.6M or a loss in federal assistance beginning July 1, 1983 of $1,700,000.00. With this shock, there is no question, PVTA could not have funded the proposed new STM/ATU contract. It was a blessing that ATU turned it down.

On the brighter side, PVTA's programs have brought about an increase in passengers, passengers per mile and fare box revenue, while showing a decrease in cost of operation per mile and cost of support per passenger. We have to continue this effort if we are to maintain the current level of service in the district with available funds forecast through June 1986. PVTA is working towards reduced operating costs by investing in the Main Street Garage Springfield, a proposal to build a new facility in Northampton, a new fare collection and counting system, rebuilding the older GMC buses and retrofitting the RTS air-conditioning system. The funds used for the above can not be used to pay operating costs. Don't we wish we could.

With the support of every taxpayer, every passenger and potential passenger and all transit employees, we will find a way to keep service at its current level.

Robert D. Manz

Bob Manz
Administrator

McDonald's Promotion Kicks Off

A joint venture between McDonald's and PVTA was kicked off January 15, 1983. McDonald's has agreed to offer a "buy one, get one free" coupon for every token ten-pak purchased. The offer is good at 13 area McDonald's restaurants and is slated to run through March 31. PVTA Administrator, Robert D. Manz appears with McDonaldland® character Grimace at the Third National Bank headquarters.

Back On The Job

Ken Chapin began driving buses in 1948. For more than 30 years, he carried riders up and down the lines in Springfield and out to Ludlow — compiling a near flawless driving record and gaining popularity as one of the friendliest drivers around.

Despite a heart attack in 1977, Chapin managed to return to the driver's box after only a brief illness. But a gnawing pain stayed with the STM driver who for the past five years has driven the Route 106 bus back and forth to Ludlow.

The pain was caused by the heart ailment known as angina, the same disease that killed his father, Chapin said.

On September 20, 1982, it had reached an intolerable level. STM Transportation Superintendent Jim Wilcox took Chapin to Springfield's Mercy Hospital. After weeks of tests and medication proved unsuccessful in stopping the problem, he was transferred to Baystate Medical Center. Doctors there discovered four blockages in arteries to his heart. On October 12, Chapin underwent a six-hour open-heart surgery procedure. The operation, in this case a quadruple bypass, kept him out of work until January 7.

"In a matter of a month, I felt ready to go back to work. I felt that good. But of course, they don't let you right away," the 59-year-old father of five said.

Chapin, who lives in West Springfield with his wife Marjorie, is not the first STM driver to return to work after open-heart surgery. According to Wilcox, Henry LaLiberte, Bernard S. Marcinkiewicz, Wally Bourassa and John Wynne have all been under the scalpel. And supervisor Bob Germain also went through the ordeal.

Chapin has a lot to brag about. He is now up for a 16 year accident-free driving award.

"It feels great to be back to work," he said. "I was getting into trouble at home, telling my wife how to cook."

Wilcox said he was sorely missed.

"Ken has a reputation for being congenial with passengers," Wilcox said. "He seems to click. He's almost the ideal, but of course, we don't want his head to get too big. We're glad he's around."

Springfield Garage Work Begins

The first phase of the proposed renovation of Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's Springfield Bus Garage began during the second week of February.

PVTA Advisory Board members in February awarded a $123,000 contract to E.J. Pinney Co., Inc. of Springfield to install three bus lifts in the south end of the maintenance garage located at 2840 Main St.

Major rehabilitation of the facilities, purchased from the former Springfield Street Railway Co. in 1981, is scheduled to take place in four phases of a three-year period. Total costs are estimated to be between $2.5 million and $4 million, depending on bids and availability of federal funds.

PVTA is planning a major groundbreaking ceremony in early summer, once bids are taken and a contract awarded for construction of a new service building. Renovations are necessary to continue using the bus facilities at existing service levels, and to allow for an expanded role in the future.

The plans are based on a garage study completed in January by Gannett Fleming Engineers and Planners in association with the Hartford Design Group. Under the proposed project, PVTA intends to refurbish the interior of the present facilities and create a modern bus maintenance and storage complex, replete with full service facilities and a new, computerized diagnostic center.

E.J. Pinney Co., in addition to installing the new bus lifts, will replace a section of the floor within the project area.

The entire project will be completed in four proposed phases to allow PVTA to continue making maximum use of its facilities and avoid service interruptions. The bulk of the project will be completed in the second and third phases of work.

New PVTA Assistant

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz announced in January the appointment of Stephen Gazillo as Assistant to the Administrator.

In his new position, Gazillo will help direct public relations, assist in writing annual reports, grants and press releases and work to improve ridership levels via promotion.

Before taking the position, he worked for three years as a news reporter, associate editor and copywriter for various publications in the Greater Springfield area.

Gazillo earned his bachelor's degree from Clark University, Worcester, MA., and received his master's degree in geography/planning from Laval University, Quebec, Canada.

He replaces Alan E. Patashnick, who resigned last summer to take a position in Los Angeles.

Gazillo's job has been changed to include more publicity-related activities.

Thanks for getting the job done! — Bill Perkins, general manager of Springfield Transit Management, Inc., is all smiles after receiving a certificate of appreciation from PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz. Manz presented the certificates to all six PVTA carriers, including STM, Inc., Longueil Transportation, Western Mass. Bus Lines, UMass Transit Service, Peter Pan Bus Lines and Holyoke Street Railway Co, at a recent PVTA board meeting.

Buses To Be Revamped

In a move that could save nearly $2 million over the next 10 years and change the look of its buses, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is planning to reconvert the air conditioning systems on its RTS buses.

While it might look stylish, the slanted-back on 125 of PVTA's buses has proved a costly disadvantage, according to PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz. Air conditioning condensers on those buses are housed right next to the radiator, causing the engines to run hotter, be more prone to breakdowns and be less fuel efficient.

The General Motors Co. buses — called the RTS 02 series — were the only advanced-design buses available when PVTA purchased them in 1977. At least twice a year, the air conditioning condensers on them must be cleaned because of dirt and other foreign matter that clogs it, Manz said. Such work has been an added expense in the normal maintenance of buses.

To rectify the problem, the PVTA plans to spend an estimated $750,000 to change the old air conditioning systems. The project, to be financed primarily through a federal capital improvement grant, involves installing an air conditioning conversion system on the back of buses.

A conversion kit, made by General Motors and Thermal King, consists of a new air conditioning condenser that sits above the engine in the back and is capped by a compartment cover. The buses will now have a square back, similar to the 40-ft. 1980 RTS buses used in the University of Massachusetts Transit Service.

"The buses will look different, but they will be more reliable and cost-efficient, providing better service to PVTA riders," Manz said.

MASS. Y3.PVTA1: 3/5

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

InTransit

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

Issue No. 5
May 1983

OCT 9 1987
University of Massachusetts Depository Copy

Rep. James G. Collins, D-Amherst, listens attentively during PVTA's third annual Legislators' Conference.

Nearly a dozen state legislators and their aides met with PVTA officials in April to discuss public transit in the Pioneer Valley and receive a first hand account of the problems the Authority faces and the success it has accomplished.

The occasion was the third annual Legislators' Conference, held in the Board of Directors room of BayBank Valley Tower in Springfield.

The good news, legislators were told, is that PVTA's ridership is increasing, and that the Authority should be able to operate in the black as long as funding sources remain stable.

But the main topic of discussion was PVTA's staggering interest debt — totalling some $433,000 in FY'83. PVTA Advisory Board Chairman Michael L. Laverdiere and Administrator Robert D. Manz urged legislators to examine mechanisms to speed up the delivery of state money to the Authority. Manz explained that PVTA is forced to borrow nearly all of its $8 million annual operating budget while it waits to receive state and federal money.

Last year, PVTA received 90 percent of its state funds in July, a month after the end of the fiscal year.

Legislators who commented on the problem said they understood PVTA's plight, but made no promises concerning their ability to resolve the dilemma.

Manz cited the example of legislation enacted in New York as a possible solution. In that state, funding for transit authorities is committed prior to the start of the fiscal year and distributed in quarterly installments.

Attending the meeting were Reps. Steven D. Pierce, R-Westfield; Rep. Robert L. Howarth, R-Springfield; Walter A. DeFilippi, R-West Springfield; Raymond A. Jordan, D-Springfield; William A. Carey, D-Easthampton; Rep. Collins, aides to Reps. Robert J. Rohan, D-Holyoke, Arthur J. McKenna, D-Springfield, and Mike Manning, representing Sen. Martin T. Reilly, D-Springfield; and Springfield Mayor Theodore Dimauro.

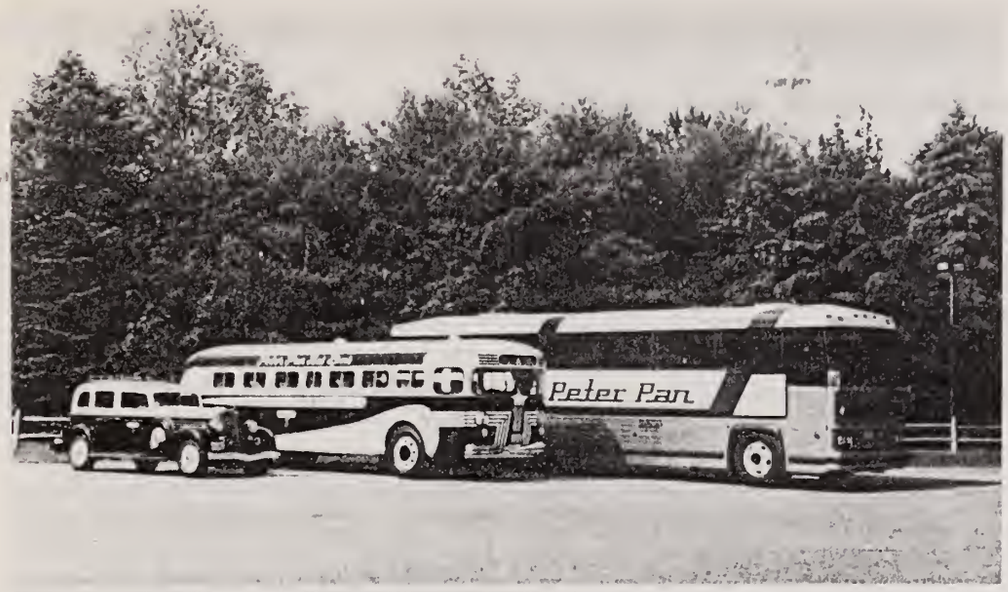
Peter Pan Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Peter Pan Bus Lines has reached a milestone in its history this year. The company is proudly celebrating its fiftieth anniversary.

The story of the origin of Peter Pan Bus Lines, Inc. is one of a classically "humble beginning." The company was founded largely through the efforts of one man, Peter Carmen Picknelly, who established a fledgling limousine service in Springfield in the middle of the Depression era. Peter Pan officials today say his foresight, hard work and sound business sense helped the company steadily expand its operations, from its single line run between Northampton/Springfield and Boston to its present wide-ranging transportation network. Today, Peter Pan Bus Lines operates the largest certificated route system within the Commonwealth. The company also operates one route for the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, the Route 502 from downtown Springfield to the Eastfield Mall.

It was in 1933 that Picknelly purchased from a William Shean of Springfield the "good will and assets" of the Yellow Cab Air Line, which included a

(continued on page 2)



PVTA Scores High

Pioneer Valley Transit Authority ranked among the best in a survey of the 14 regional transit authorities in Massachusetts.

It got top grades for serving elderly and handicapped passengers and for developing techniques to attract riders and keep costs down. The report was compiled by the Mass. Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

The Regional Transit Authority operations report for the fiscal year ending in June, 1982, shows PVTA has survived in the face of subsidy cuts and inflation.

PVTA, which serves 23 communities in Hampden and Hampshire counties, had the highest elderly and handicapped passenger count in the state, with 227,000 falling into those categories in fiscal 1982.

In addition, the cost per passenger for those special services was the lowest in the state, or $2.38 per person.

The authority was also cited for several marketing techniques, including its employer pass program in which private companies offer passes to employees at discount prices; a new marketing-advertising program; a revised farebox revenue procedure which discourages use of dollar bills and saves counting costs; and instituting automobile insurance discounts for pass users.

The report called fiscal 1982 "a year of challenge to the regional transit authority program" as it cited federal cutbacks in aid and Proposition 2½'s impact on local assessments as reasons.

PVTA was also rated high for its efficiency on its fixed-route service. Its cost per passenger was 82 cents, the second lowest in the state. The average cost per passenger in Massachusetts was 94 cents.

Holyoke Route Changes

Effective May 31, five PVTA routes in Holyoke, operated by the Holyoke Street Railway Co. (HSRC), will undergo schedule changes and route modifications. The changes result from nearly a year of planning, study, public hearings and meetings between bus-riders, PVTA officials, HSRC, Springfield Transit Management, Inc. and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission staff. The routes affected by the changes are the 202, 204, 205, 208 and the 211/212. Routes 203, 209, 210, 214 and 215 are now incorporated into the affected routes. Those not affected are the 206, 207, 217 and 221.

PVTA will distribute new schedules and begin public information efforts during the week of May 23.

The changes are expected to save PVTA money and establish more efficient routes by through-routing wherever possible. PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said he expected the route changes will eventually lead to more stable ridership in Holyoke.

... Peter Pan Celebrates

route that ran between Northampton, Holyoke and Springfield, via Stafford Springs, Conn. to Worcester, Framingham and Boston. The purchase price? A hefty $4,500 for a 4-vehicle fleet that included a 1929 7-passenger Packard limousine, a 1929 Pierce Arrow limousine and two 7-passenger Buick limousines. Picknelly now had exclusive rights to operate the Northampton-Springfield-Boston route from a main terminal on Vernon Street in Springfield. He was driver, maintenance crew and ticket agent as well as owner of his new company, which he christened Peter Pan for his two young children's affection for the J.M. Barrie fable of the little boy who never grew old.

The company quickly experienced a steady increase in passenger traffic and passenger revenue, enabling parallel increases in fleet size and scheduled service.

When the company incorporated in 1951 under the name of Peter Pan Bus Line, Inc., Peter C. Picknelly had built a strong foundation on which the future of the organization would rest.

In 1961, Peter Pan Bus Lines became one of the first companies in the United States to acquire special authority from the Interstate Commerce Commission to operate all-expense paid motorcoach tours.

Under the direction of Peter Louis Picknelly, who assumed presidency when his father died in 1964, a separate Charter Department was formed and commenced to operate a full-scale service.

In recent years, the rise of Atlantic City as a favorite destination has opened up a new area of business for Peter Pan.

Home base for all this varied type of travel activity is the Springfield Bus Terminal on Main Street, a modern, custom-designed facility which Peter Pan shares with four other major bus companies.

Editors note: The above article is excerpted from an article distributed by Belcher Associates of Springfield.

PVTA Set To Buy Computer System

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is currently negotiating to buy a computerized Management Information System from Vista Systems Inc. of Princeton, N.J.

The system, which would consist of one Prime Rabbit 2250 Central Processing Unit and 16 video terminals, will be used mostly by PVTA's Administrative Office, Springfield Transit Management, Inc. and UMass Transit, with a small number of terminals going to the rest of PVTA's carriers.

PVTA Financial Officer Cynthia Landers, in a presentation to the PVTA Advisory Board in April, told board members the new computer system would improve the Authority's ability to gather information and would help reduce its clerical work.

"In a time of shrinking funding, the Authority requires the ability to quickly gather timely information. The computer system gives us the ability to manipulate information into various scenarios in order to respond to the constantly changing funding situation," Mrs. Landers said.

The system's capabilities fall into six main categories, she said, including financial management, vehicle maintenance, transportation management, elderly and handicapped service management, report capabilities and payroll and personnel management.

It will cost approximately $285,000 and will be paid for by a federal capital improvement grant, with 20 percent of the cost coming from state and local funds.

From the Administrator's Desk

AN OPEN LETTER TO PVTA DRIVERS:

During the past year, we spent a good deal of time stressing the importance of a unified fare structure and collection system. The constant emphasis on unifying our system, so that a passenger boarding in Springfield is treated with the same courtesy and procedures as a passenger in Holyoke, Chicopee, E. Longmeadow or Westfield, is paying off.

For the first time in three years, I'm pleased to report there has been an increase in ridership, due in part at least to the efforts our drivers have been making in the fare collection process. In the first half of fiscal 1983, PVTA ridership increased by more than 200,000 over the same period a year ago. Revenues during that same time have increased by some $180,000.

And so I would like to take this time to personally commend drivers for their courtesy with passengers, and for their diligent efforts in enforcing our new transfer policies, already 10 months old.

When PVTA adopted a new zone structure last July, which standardized every zone charge at 15 cents, I said it was crucial that we make our system equitable and keep our fare "fair" for all passengers. I also said that to accomplish that required a positive attitude and an assurance that all drivers follow the same procedures.

It is heartening to see that the time spent within each of our carriers going over the new transfer policies was well worth it. Indeed, helping passengers to understand our policies and keeping a close eye on the one or two that try to circumvent it, these are some of the jobs of the driver that go unmentioned, but that are crucial. The driver that performs his job correctly in every way makes it easier for the next driver who has the same intentions.

Now that the transition from our old system is complete, I look forward to a continuation of the trend we've begun in this fiscal year, and urge all of you to continue your good efforts and thank you for the job well done.

Congratulations!

Robert D. Manz

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority this past month became the first transit system in the nation to test all available rear air conditioning retrofit units for the GMC RTS II 03 series buses. From left is a General Motors Corp. unit, a Thermo King unit and a unit supplied by Suetrak. The three companies were bidders on the first of several contracts to retrofit all 125 of PVTA's RTS II buses.

87 Employees Receive Safety Awards

Innovative classes and an intensified safety program have contributed to an improved accident record for Pioneer Valley Transit Authority operators this year.

In recognition of this, PVTA honored a total of 87 drivers and mechanics at its second annual Safety Awards Banquet held recently at the Holiday Inn in Holyoke. The number of award recipients represents an 11-percent increase over last year. Unlike other transit operators, PVTA gives awards only to drivers who have compiled a minimum of five consecutive years of accident-free driving. In addition, mechanics and maintenance workers must work a minimum of three years without an industrial accident in order to be honored.

PVTA's five carriers this past year escalated efforts to improve safety records by holding innovative training classes. The courses were designed to familiarize drivers with specific problems that were identified as trouble spots.

STM driver Dennis Stopa was a recipient of a 9 yr. accident free safety pin.

"A lot has been done to improve our record of safety," said William McCullough, a safety supervisor and chief organizer of the banquet. "Drivers from PVTA's five carriers have compiled a total of 631 years of safety, while maintenance personnel compiled 132 years."

Three drivers this year received awards for more than 25 years of accident-free driving.

McCullough also noted that the overall safety program has helped improve relations with passengers and among drivers.

The innovative approach to safety this year focused on accident prevention, he added. In one case, mechanics were required to attend an exercise class conducted by a physical therapist. The instructor taught them how to reduce back injuries through exercises. The result was a net reduction in the amount of sick days caused by industrial accidents.

This year's safety awards banquet was attended by PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz, and by the managers of PVTA's two largest operators, General Manager William Perkins of Springfield Transit Management Inc. and William Barrett of the University of Massachusetts Transit Service.

Drivers Get Kick Out Of Roadeo

The challenge of driving an RTS II bus through a narrow path of cones is no piece of cake, as Lydia Maloney of Holyoke Street Railway Co. discovers (above photo). Lydia was one of more than 20 drivers who competed in PVTA's second annual Bus Roadeo, held May 1 at the University of Massachusetts. At left, Springfield Transit Management Inc. driver Truman Easton watches intently as Diane Clay of Longueil Transportation Co. marks his score. Winners will be announced in the next IN TRANSIT issue.

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The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

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October 1983

BIG E '83 - The PVTA carried more than 19,000 passengers to the Eastern States Exposition this year, a six-percent increase over last year. For the first time, riders were offered a special transit package, whereby anyone who bought a roundtrip bus ticket to the fair received a Big E ticket at $1 off the regular admission.

PVTA Exec. Ass't. Devises Seatbelt for Handicap

PVTA Executive Assistant Charlene D. Carliell has devised a seatbelt that will insure the safety of thousands of handicapped passengers who participate in the Authority's Elderly & Handicapped van program.

The simple yet clever invention is a safety belt that is placed around the person and the back of the wheelchair, and is then pulled in and tightened until comfortably secure.

"The seatbelt should be placed on the wheelchair passenger before he or she has entered the van, thereby adding a degree of safety when boarding the vehicles and also when disembarking," Mrs. Carliell said.

Handicapped passengers often complained they did not feel secure in their wheelchairs, even though the chairs are firmly attached to the floors of the vans.

"The seatbelt keeps them from sliding about when the vans make sharp turns. We're getting really positive feedback from the persons who will be using them," said Mrs. Carliell.

The addition of the seatbelt was hailed by PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz as a positive step toward providing the same safety measures for handicapped persons that are now afforded automobile passengers. Until Mrs. Carliell's invention, there were no portable seatbelts available for handicapped persons. They were either permanently attached to the chair or to the vehicle.

Drivers of all PVTA vans have now been instructed that they will be responsible for carrying out the new seatbelt requirement policy.

BANNER YEAR FOR RIDERSHIP

A comprehensive transit program adopted by the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Advisory Board is beginning to show its merit.

PVTA ridership in fiscal year 1983 showed an increase for the first time since the federal government began reducing its assistance to the public transit industry. Approximately 12 million people boarded PVTA buses during the last fiscal year, and revenue reached its highest level since FY '81

"The ridership increase", noted PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz, "is great news for the transit industry in the Pioneer Valley."

Manz said that farebox revenue in FY '83 was $3,012,850

"I think you have to credit the program adopted by the PVTA Advisory Board and implemented by its staff and carriers. These positive figures did not come by accident," said Manz.

Manz cited a number of factors that contributed to the successful year, including the decision to maintain the current, 55-cent base fare, the establishment of a simplified fare policy, improved transit promotions, improved driver-passenger relations, consistent on-time performance, clean buses, an aggressive employer pass program and the introduction of bus tokens.

"What's significant," he added, "is that the ridership increase occurred with no additional service. Our budget in FY '83 was lower than our FY '82 budget. This is positive news for taxpayers in the Valley."

Manz said he anticipates the growth trend will continue through the

(continued on page 2)

AT PVTA, SAFETY COMES FIRST!

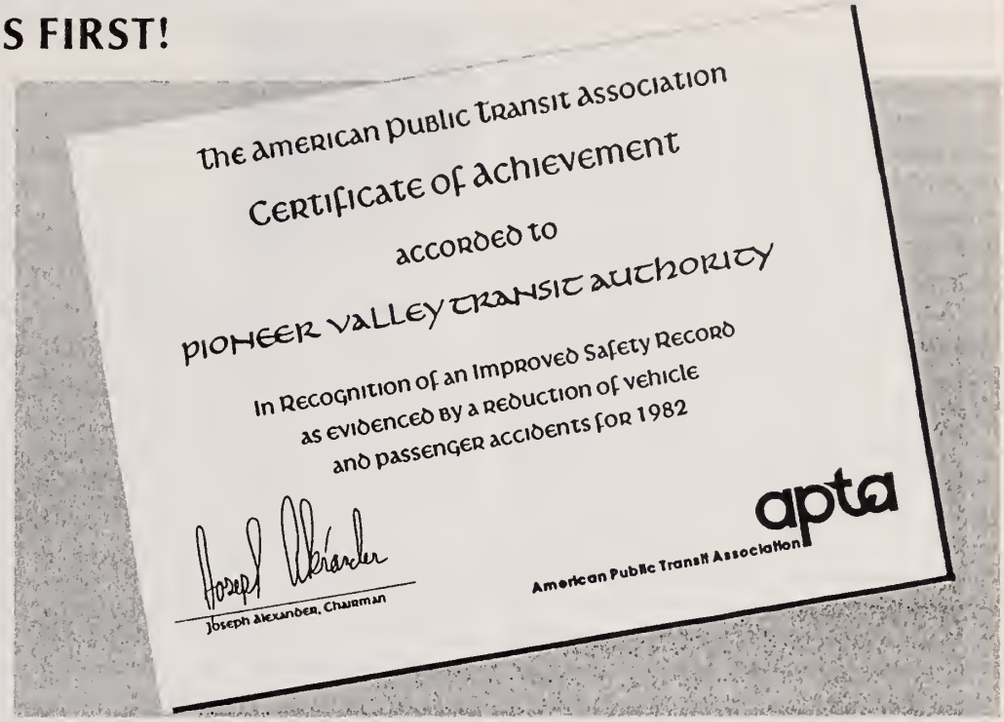
At the inaugural meeting of the PVTA Safety and Training Supervisors' Committee, three policies were adopted that will mean a safer ride for PVTA's 50,000 daily riders.

The policies include requiring headlights be turned on on all PVTA buses, day or night; strict enforcement of no smoking rules — drivers are not allowed to smoke on the bus; and the addition of small, convex wide-angle mirrors on the right outside mirrors of all PVTA buses.

The PVTA Safety Committee is composed of the safety supervisors from all PVTA carriers. Members at this time include William McCullough, Safety Supervisor at STM, Inc.; Jennifer Boyce and Vicki Gervickas of UMass Transit Service; Chuck McNeil of Western Mass. Bus Lines; Roland Cote of Holyoke Street Railway Co. and Marshall Hanson of Longueil Transportation Co.

Explaining the logic of the policies, McCullough said turning the lights on draws attention to the bus and is a warning to drivers not to pull in front of the bus.

"Believe it or not, it really works," he said. By keeping the lights on, we've already noticed there are fewer incidences of buses touching the rear bumpers of other vehicles."



McCullough said the committee has also re-emphasized the importance of using directional signals when buses go in and out of a stop.

"The directional signal," he said, "is the only way the bus driver has of communicating with other vehicles following behind. What we're finding out in our program is that it's the little things that make the difference between a driver who is safe and one who isn't."

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz noted that the Authority's entire safety program has undergone remarkable improvement during the past several years. This past spring, in recognition of that effort, PVTA received a "Certificate of Achievement" from the American Public Transit Association for having demonstrated an improved safety record. Also, a record 87 drivers and mechanics were honored at the Annual Safety Awards Banquet.

"We hope our record will continue to improve," Manz said, "and we plan to continue escalating efforts to make safety a top priority at all levels of our operations."

... Banner Year

current fiscal year, but at a slower rate.

"We have to be very aggressive from now on," he said. In the future, Manz said the PVTA will work more closely with area colleges, continue to make capital improvements and carry on aggressive marketing efforts.

School's in Session
Drive Carefully!

Design A Logo

Are you creative? Do you have an idea for a new PVTA safety logo? The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is seeking creative designs from all PVTA employees for a new safety logo. The design should be simple, one or two-color (maximum) and best symbolize the importance of safety. In the future, the design may be made into an emblem for PVTA-safe driver awards. Inside the emblem would be a number showing how many years of safe driving each driver has earned. Emblems would be presented to drivers at the Annual Safety Awards Banquet. Also, the logo would be used for all communications concerning safety matters and the PVTA. To submit a design Send your drawing by Nov. 18 on an 8½ x 11 inch sheet of white paper to either William McCullough, Safety Supervisor, Springfield Transit Management, Inc., or to Stephen Gazillo, PVTA, 1365 Main St., Springfield, MA 01103 The logo will be unveiled in a forthcoming issue of In Transit. There will be a reward for the person who submits the winning design.

Air Conditioning Units Installed on 23 buses

The first phase of PVTA's project to install air conditioning retrofit units on 23 1977 RTS II buses will be completed by the end of October, PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said.

All 125 RTS IIs will eventually sport the new unit and a new look. The retrofit units, supplied by Suetrak of Denver, Colorado, are being installed on the RTS 03 series buses since it was discovered the units would save the Authority thousands of dollars in maintenance costs and extend the life of the vehicles.

The RTS II bus was originally designed to have the air conditioning unit housed next to the radiator, close to the engine. The design, however, proved to be inefficient, since the condensers tended to overheat and collect dust and debris.

Recognizing the problem, several companies devised a retrofit kit that allowed for the removal of the old condenser and the placing of a new unit above the engine.

PVTA sought bids on the new unit and awarded a contract to retrofit 23 of PVTA's RTS II buses to Suetrak. Manz anticipates all the buses to be retrofitted by next Summer.

From the Administrator's Desk

The PVTA has adopted a bold plan for the 80s, a comprehensive effort to improve its facilities, realign its manpower needs and redesign its service to establish a solid base for growth through the end of the decade.

A quick overview of some of our projects tells the story. When the 40 GMC Silversiders (4519s & 4521s) are rebuilt, now scheduled at a rate of one per month, we will undoubtedly have a first rate fleet. As the need arises, this may be expanded by as many as 10 40-foot buses in 1984 or 1985.

We are also shoring up our garage and maintenance facilities throughout the system. In Springfield, the reconstruction of the Main Street Garage is now moving full steam ahead, and the entire modern complex should be completed by the fall of 1985. In Amherst, we will initiate improvements to the UMass garage, and in Northampton, the new facility is slated to be open by early 1985. This can only mean that PVTA will have an excellent, efficient maintenance base.

Improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness will be the means for achieving our objectives for the 80s and beyond. The addition of a computer-based Management Information System will help us get the most out of our available resources.

As all this comes together we will be able to grow because of a simple rule that applies to any transit agency. The better the service we market to the public, the greater the potential for ridership growth. Our efforts with area employers and schools, such as Springfield Technical Community College, Holyoke Community College, the Elms College and Western New England College, will substantially contribute to the goal of boosting ridership and bringing about growth in the PVTA system.

I look forward with much enthusiasm to the successful implementation of these programs, and am proud of the accomplishments we have made thus far. The ultimate credit for success goes to the transportation and maintenance people who make it work.

Robert D. Manz

Bob Manz
Administrator

We'll miss you, Norm!

The PVTA would like to salute Norm Burgess, who retired Sept. 30 from Holyoke Street Railway Co. Norm began as a driver at HSRC 38 years ago, and rose to the presidency of ATU Local 537. In 1970, he joined management and became HSRCs Superintendent of Transportation, the position he held until his retirement. A resident of the Aldenville section of Chicopee, Norm plans to spend his first months of retirement in Florida. Russell L. Ward Jr. assumed Norm's position on Oct. 1.

SPRINGFIELD GARAGE RENOVATION UNDERWAY — STM maintenance worker Francis Pappaceno carries on work as usual, as a bucket loader in the background levels the floor in preparation for new bus lifts.

PVTA Receives $2 Million Grant

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority has received approval of a $2 million federal grant to continue improvements to its transit facilities and to further upgrade the efficiency and comfort of its buses.

The $2,068,810 program approved by the federal Urban Mass Transit Administration includes continued installation of air conditioning reconversion units in PVTA's RTS buses, renovation of the Springfield bus garage and rehabilitation of older PVTA buses. Work will also be undertaken at the University of Massachusetts Transit Service's facility, including installation of adjustable lifts and an automatic door. A small portion of the money has also been allocated for transit planning purposes and for operational support.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said the federal money would allow the Authority to continue to provide excellent transit service to the region while working to make efficient use of taxpayers' money.

Installation of the air conditioning retrofit units, Manz noted, is an example of the cost-saving efforts of the Authority. (See story, page 3.)

Work to upgrade the Springfield bus garage, purchased from the former Springfield Street Railway Co. in 1982, began this past spring as part of a comprehensive effort to improve PVTA's overall bus storage and maintenance capacity. When completed, the garage will have been fully converted into a modern complex set to meet the needs of more than 125 PVTA buses. It will include new bus lifts, washers and painting equipment, a computerized management information system and a refurbished office space for driver training and education programs.

"We are pleased with the cooperation we have received from UMTA in seeking approval of this program," Manz said. "Consistently, the UMTA Region I office (headed by Richard Doyle) has provided the kind of support we need in our efforts to make transit cost-effective and attractive to Pioneer Valley residents."

NEW FAREBOXES

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is installing 150 new fareboxes, purchased from General Farebox, Inc. of Chicago, Ill. The new fareboxes, part of a federal capital grant, will be installed by the end of October.

The non-registering fareboxes will make it easier for passengers to deposit money and will provide a higher level of security than the current fareboxes in use. The new boxes will also ease work for PVTA drivers.

The coins, easily visible through a glass display, can be dropped into the coinbox with the flick of a button. A light will display coins at night, making it easy for the driver to determine if the right fare has been deposited.

GFI was one of the two bidders for the new equipment. The second bidder, Duncan Industries, of Elk Grove Village, Ill., had originally placed a lower bid ($416,625) for the fareboxes. After careful examination of the bid specifications, PVTA officials determined that the farebox provided by Duncan did not provide enough security.

The decision not to accept Duncan despite its low bid - a process that was approved by the federal Urban Mass Transit Administration - proved to be a fortunate one, PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said. Duncan has since gone out of business and sold all its equipment to GFI.

"The Authority is especially fortunate because the bidding drew competition and therefore a competitive price. Today, there is only one major manufacturer. If PVTA were to receive bids on the same equipment, the price would be higher," Manz said.

NEW FAREBOXES INSTALLED — STM Payroll Clerk Lee Cocchi and driver Bob LaFlamme show off the new farebox being installed on 150 PVTA buses.

PVTA Road Tests Revolutionary Compressor

The PVTA has entered into an agreement with Dunham-Bush, Inc. of West Hartford, Conn., to test for two years the first production unit of the revolutionary rotary screw air conditioning compressor.

The compressor could eventually save the Authority thousands of dollars in fuel and maintenance. Unlike conventional "reciprocating" compressors used in most air conditioning units, the Dunham-Bush rotary screw type contains few moving parts and is able to start up at road speeds.

"We're confident the unit will be maintenance free while at the same time save considerable amounts of fuel," said James Laird, a spokesman for Dunham-Bush, Inc.

Laird explained that conventional compressors in transit vehicle air conditioning units use engine heat to "reheat" the air inside the bus when the temperature starts to get too cool. The Dunham-Bush compressor does not require that the air inside the bus be reheated, which means less fuel is used from the engine.

PVTA will purchase the Dunham-Bush compressor after the end of a two-year trial period, if it is satisfied with its performance.

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LEFT: PVTA's new Steyr City Bus is the first of its kind to be operated in the Pioneer Valley. The specially-equipped vehicles are three times more fuel efficient than larger buses and are capable of transporting three wheelchair-bound passengers.

BELOW: Joan Szpakanik of the Springfield Mayor's Office for Handicapped Affairs recently became one of the first handicapped persons to board the new mini-bus. Mrs. Szpakanik is assisted below by PVTA Executive Assistant Charlene Dias and Springfield Transit Management Inc. Safety Supervisor William McCullough.

PVTA ADDS SMALL BUSES TO ITS FLEET

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority proudly announces the addition of seven "Steyr City Buses" to its modern fleet of transit vehicles.

The new small buses, capable of handling up to three wheelchair-bound passengers, will be used for fixed-route bus service in areas where ridership is low and by agencies currently operating service for elderly and handicapped citizens.

The vehicles will also be used to launch an innovative program for handicapped citizens in the Pioneer Valley. The PVTA Advisory Board in May approved a $30,000 budget to kick off the program, designed to help determine the transportation needs of handicapped workers in Greater Springfield and Northampton-Amherst areas.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz, in announcing the program, said a task force for the handicapped transportation program was being organized to set up guidelines and priorities.

"Until now, we have had a problem meeting the needs of the handicapped. I have always felt the answer to the problem from the transit perspective would be to add specialized vehicles to our fleet. I think we're now taking a big step toward meeting those needs," he said.

Manz also noted that the new 15-passenger vehicles will save PVTA money in its operating expenses along fixed-routes where ridership is low. The Steyr vehicles are equipped with four-cylinder diesel engines, with fuel consumption estimated to be about 15-miles per gallon as compared to 4-miles per gallon with a large bus.

The mini-buses were purchased from Trans Bus of America Corp. of Portland, Maine, for $538,000. The funds used were part of a $2.2 million capital improvement grant received from the federal government in 1982.

PVTA plans to use the buses on its Northampton-to-Easthampton and Granby-to-Holyoke routes.

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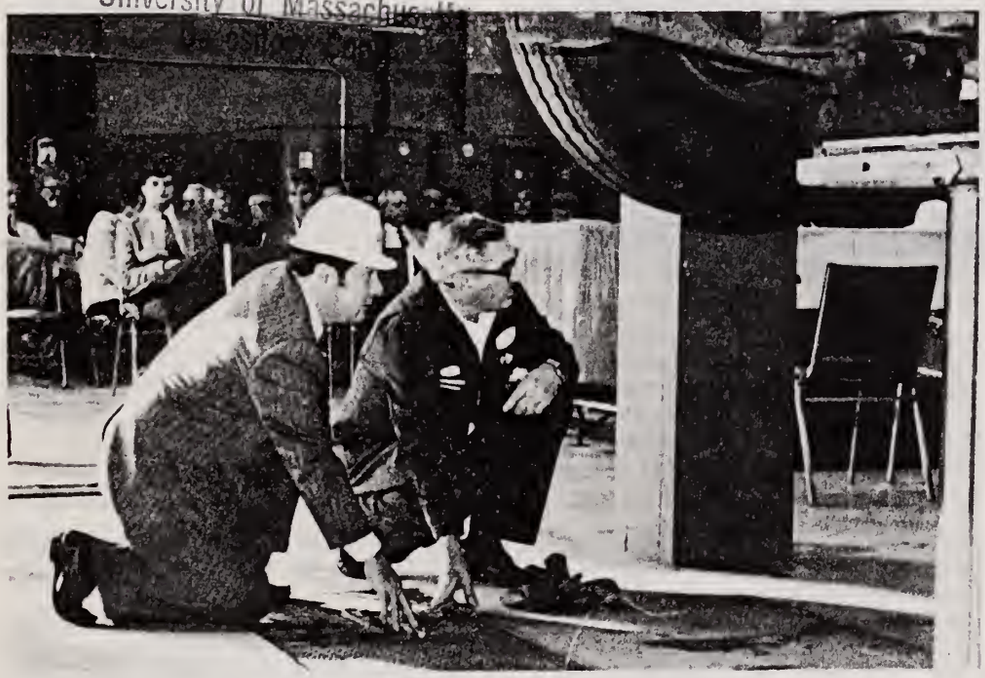

Outgoing Springfield Mayor Theodore E. Dimauro and STM, Inc. maintenance chief Benny Grabierz operate one of the new bus lifts at the Springfield Transit Facility. Dimauro, along with other invited guests, including UMTA Region I Administrator Richard Doyle, PVTA Board Chairman Leonard M. Wagner and Administrator Robert D. Manz, spoke at groundbreaking/ribbon cutting ceremonies held in December. The ceremony launched the beginning of $1.8 million in renovations to the 78-year-old transit facility. The work – contracted to Fontaine Brothers of Springfield – constitutes Phase I of a major refurbishing effort that will take several years to complete. Installation of the new lifts was necessary in order to allow continuous use of the facility while other renovations take place.

RIDERSHIP GROWTH CONTINUES!

Ridership in the first quarter of fiscal 1984 continued to grow as the PVTA carried 2,395,373 passengers – a slight increase over the first quarter in FY'83. Ridership for the same period in '82 (July - September) was 2,392,290.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz released the figures at a recent press conference.

"The positive trend is continuing," Manz said, "and I think it's due to the cooperative efforts of all our carriers and staff."

The total number of miles operated in the first quarter of '84 was reduced from 914,101 in '83 to 894,548 in '84.

In light of the positive figures, Advisory Board member David Moriarty has asked the Authority to consider restoring nightime bus service whereever possible. (See From The Administrator's Desk)

Other positive results for the first quarter of '84 are as follows:

- the cost per mile of PVTA bus service was $1.89, compared to $2.03 during the same time in FY'83.
- the cost per passenger was $.87 this year, compared to $.94 in the first quarter of FY'83.
- the passenger per mile ratio for all PVTA routes was 2.40, compared to 2.39 for the first quarter of FY'83. FY'83.
- PVTA's subsidy increased slightly in the first quarter, from $1,278,370 in FY'83 to $1,324,692 in FY'84.

PVTA's fiscal year runs from July, 1983 to June, 1984.

Transit Tips *En Español*

The PVTA has published its informative "Transit Tips" brochure in Spanish as part of major efforts to improave transit information available to Springfield's Hispanic population.

The handy information flyer contains a map of bus routes in Springfield, a description of each route and a series of "tips" on riding the bus.

Publishing the brochure in Spanish is the result of lengthy surveys of the Hispanic population, which determined that bus ridership would improve if more information were available in Spanish.

The Spanish version of Transit Tips will be made available at four locations in Springfield, including the New England Farmworkers Council, the Housing Allowance Program, Brightwood Supermarket and the Spanish American Union. A similar brochure is being prepared for Holyoke.

Campus Corner

According to safety records kept at UMASS Transit by its Coordinator of Training and Safety Jenny Boyce, the system has seen a continued growth of the average miles between preventable accidents since FY-1981. In FY-1981 the miles between preventable accidents was at an average of 13,068. There was a dramatic increase in FY-1982, to 18,690 and then in FY-1983, the operators at UMASS brought that number up to 23,789. This is an outstanding record and indicates what exceptional operators UMASS drivers are.

This improvement is all the more impressive when you consider that the annual vehicle miles operated by UMASS increased by 25% in FY-82, with the addition of Route 301 to Mount Holyoke College.

We congratulate *all* of you at UMASS for performing such a good job and anticipate an even better average in FY-84.

William C. Barrett, Dir.
Transportation & Parking

Westfield State College Vice President Warren Hill (left) and PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz shake hands and show off the new PVTA display at the college's student union. The sign provides students schedule information on buses running from the college to Springfield, Holyoke and Chicopee. WSC students – having agreed to pay a set fee per semester – benefit from a special transit program providing them unlimited rides on PVTA buses. PVTA officials hope to initiate similar programs at other area colleges.

FOR SAFETY'S SAKE

Since man's beginning, safety has been one of his main concerns. He clothed himself for protection from the elements, he placed fire at the entrance of his cave to protect his family and afford them safety from roaming animals. Metal armor was fashioned for safety and protection in battle.

In transportation of people, protection and safety of passengers were one of man's early concerns. Tops and covers of some sort were placed on wagons and carriages. Soon after the tops, sides and then windows were added. During all these changes the passenger was of major concern and the driver always left up front exposed to the elements. In the early 1900s someone decided to take a good look at the situation and place a cover over the operator. Soon after that, sides were added and the operator found himself inside the vehicle. This change gave the passengers a different view of the person directing the vehicle in which they were riding.

The operator immediately became the center of attention and was the person to watch while riding on a public vehicle. As ridership increased, traffic grew heavier, accidents happened more often and people were injured. It was determined that some system would have to be established to regulate the transportation industry. For passenger safety and comfort, items have been added and changes made in vehicles used to transport passengers, until today, when a vast choice of vehicles has become available. Each must meet certain safety standards before it can be placed in service. People who operate these vehicles must be trained and licensed by the state in which they operate. All these changes and controls have done much to protect lives and property from damages caused by passenger vehicles.

We must never forget we are still the center of attention. People look at the bus driver when boarding and a first impression is made. After that, the operator's attitude is checked, then comes the observation of the operator in action. When people observe a driver, do they see a person who has their safety in mind? Drivers should ask themselves, "am I just aiming the vehicle in the general direction of travel, or am I driving with an air of professionalism, defensively maneuvering my vehicle safely along with the flow of traffic?"

The attitude the driver in his/her daily job reflects to passengers the concern each has for their safety!

Prepared by: William J. McCullough
Safety Coordinator of PVTA

Design A Logo, Win $25 !

There's still time to submit a design for a new PVTA logo. Only four entries have been submitted (many thanks!!! to the artists). We would like to see more before making a final choice. A $25 cash award will go to the person who draws the logo that best symbolizes safety at the PVTA. Submit the design on an 8½ x 11 inch sheet of white paper to:

William McCullough
Springfield Transit Management
2840 Main St.
Springfield, MA 01107
or
Stephen Gazillo
PVTA
1365 Main St.
Springfield, MA 01103

Transit Projects In FY'84

The following capital projects affecting transit were listed in the Pioneer Valley's Transportation Improvement Program for FY'84:

- the first phase of major renovations of the Springfield Transit facility begins this year. Fontaine Brothers of Springfield was awarded a $1.8 million general contract, subject to the approval of the federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).
- PVTA plans to continue upgrading the air conditioning units on its 35-foot RTS II 03 buses, to make them operate more efficiently. A $349,000 bid by Suetrak of Colorado to retrofit 102 RTS buses was approved by The Advisory Board in January.
- subject to UMTA approval, PVTA will install the area's first electronic passenger information system designed to provide transit information at key urban locations using computerized video terminals. The Advisory Board in December approved a proposal to have a system installed by Vista Systems Inc. of Princeton, N.J., at a cost of $79,000.
- PVTA will begin construction of a transit facility in Northampton's Industrial Park.
- the Authority will purchase 13 replacement vans for PVTA elderly and handicapped services. The vans will be equipped with wheelchair lifts at a cost of $25,000 per vehicle.
- the UMass garage will undergo minor improvements, including repaving the lot and replacing a supervisory vehicle in the fleet of maintenance vehicles.
- PVTA will buy a 4-wheel-drive power wagon with a snow plow for bus maintenance and facility service at Springfield.
- the program to renovate the 1964-1968 buses will continue throughout the year.

From The Administrator's Desk

Success has finally been reached in the 18-month effort by management and labor to reach a contract in Springfield. The PVTA Advisory Board approved on Wednesday, January 11, 1984, a non-diversion agreement and an increase in STM's budget of $300,000. The non-diversion agreement restricts PVTA from moving transit work from STM to another carrier if it would reduce the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 448 driver work force below the 104 level of January 11. The increase of $300,000 in STM's budget is $37,000 less than the amount needed to fully fund STM's dollar needs for FY'84, so reductions in spending are necessary during the next five months to meet spending limitations.

This contract is set to run until June 30, 1987, which will allow all concerned to concentrate on providing transportation and not be concerned with negotiations, arbitration and court appearances. All involved should be congratulated for the professional manner in which the months of negotiations were conducted.

In another area, the Advisory Board approved increases in service for the remainder of FY'84, estimated to cost $31,000. Six additional day trips will be added to Route 107 (State/Boston Road), increasing headways to 15 minutes all day. Two trips each were added to the Route 102 (Carew/East Springfield/Belmont), Route 113 (Maple) and Route 115 (Worthington). Night service on Saturdays will be added to Route 105 (Dickinson/Plainfield) and Route 107. These changes, we hope, demonstrate our desire to be responsive to public requests whenever possible.

Robert D. Manz

Bob Manz
Administrator

Representatives of four of the Pioneer Valley's major shopping centers gathered at the Marketplace in Springfield with PVTA officials to announce free Sunday bus service for area shoppers. From left, Evan Plotkin representing Springfield Plaza; David Mackey, general manager of the Holyoke Mall at Ingleside; Paul Bacon, general manager of the Fairfield Mall in Chicopee; Don Allard, general manager of Baystate West; and PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz. This year's program – which offered area shoppers free bus service on the four consecutive Sundays before Christmas – attracted more than 16,000 riders, a 27% increase over last year.

Big E Riders Satisfied!

Results of a transit survey of passengers riding the Big E Express last September show that more than 92% of riders were satisfied with the service.

Surprisingly, more than half of those who rode buses from the two boarding points – Eastfield Mall and Baystate West – rarely use transit. The survey also demonstrated that PVTA marketing efforts attracted nearly 60% of those who said they rarely use transit.

Big E officials – constantly looking for ways to curtail traffic problems during the 12-day annual fair – said the results have encouraged them to examine their efforts to market transit.

"We are very supportive of transit and plan to continue to cooperate with the PVTA," said Betsi Sheehan Taylor, director of marketing and public relations for the Big E.

"The survey is very encouraging, and will help us in our efforts to plan for next year's fair."

The PVTA carried 19.727 passengers to the Big E in 1983. compared to 18,693 in 1982. PVTA and the Big E initiated a special promotion this past year, when riders who purchased round trip bus tickets were given one dollar off the regular entry ticket to the Big E.

Planning for next year's fair begins early, and discussions are already underway to find ways to improve the program.

Santa Claus abandoned his sleigh for a day and took to the wheel of PVTA buses in Springfield and Holyoke on December 21. Riders who boarded when 'Ol St. Nick was driving received a Christmas surprise – a free ride! The response was overwhelming. (See letter below). The Santa shown above is also known as Gabrial Santanello, a 29-year veteran bus driver now at Springfield Transit Management, Inc.

Wednesday, Dec. 21, 1983
4:30 PM

TO THE P.V.T.A.:

This morning on Radio WMAS news, I heard that passengers boarding a P.V.T.A. bus, driven by a man in a red suit, would be given a free ride. I immediately forgot it, thinking "I should be so lucky."

But when I got on the 3:40 P.M. Westfield bus "who to my wondering eyes should appear" but the jolly 'old' gentlemen himself.

It was a considerate and generous gesture on the part of P.V.T.A. and I wish to express my appreciation. To me, a gal of 83 years, such thoughtful unexpected incidents make the real spirit of Christmas. Thank you.

Sincerely,
(Mrs) Cecile F. Barbeau
West Springfield, Mass.

MASS. Y3.PVTA1:3/8

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

OCT 9 1987

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The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

InTransit

Edited by Stephen A. Gazillo

Issue No. 8
July, 1984

One of the first streetcars operated by Holyoke Street Railway Company before the turn of the century.

Holyoke Street Railway Co. Celebrates 100th

Holyoke Street Railway Co. in June celebrated 100 years of operation in Western Massachusetts.

The company was founded on June 11, 1884 by William S. Loomis, Levi Perkins, R.B. Johnson, Samuel Chase and other members of the Holyoke community.

In 1893, Louis D. Pellissier began working there as a conductor. He worked his way up to president and served in that capacity from 1914 to 1955, when Louis D. Pellissier Jr., his son, became president.

Holyoke Street Railway Co. provides charter bus and school service, as well as public transit service, under the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, to Holyoke, Chicopee, South Hadley, Granby and Westfield, and service to Springfield.

The company held an anniversary celebration at the Chateau Provost in Chicopee on May 28.

PVTA Takes Top Award For TV Ad

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority has received the top award for local television advertising at the 32nd Annual Merit Awards sponsored recently by the Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts.

The first place award was for the production of a 60-second commercial aired last spring and fall. The ad, titled "the way to go to work," was produced by Fentin Advertising Agency of Springfield in consultation with PVTA staff.

The popular TV commercial focused on the cost of driving a car to work versus the economy and convenience of riding the bus.

It emphasized the amount of money it cost to own, operate and insure an automobile and pointed out that riding the bus can save a person as much as $2,800 a year.

"I think this award symbolizes the quality effort PVTA has been making in

(continued on page 2)

FY '85 BUDGET PASSES

The PVTA Advisory Board has unanimously approved an $11.4 million budget for fiscal year 1985 which began July 1 and runs through June 30 next year.

The budget — though 5.6 percent higher than the FY'84 figure — shows no increase in total assessments to local communities.

The increase is due mostly to the settlement last year of the Amalgamated Transit Workers Union contract for drivers at Springfield Transit Management, Inc., as well as increases in service miles and inflation.

PVTA Finance Committee Chairman Michael L. Laverdiere hailed the budget as a "workable one that will keep local assessments at the current level."

PVTA's carrier companies — STM, Inc., Holyoke Street Railway Co., Peter Pan Bus Co., Longueil Transportation Inc. Western Mass. Bus Lines and UMASS Transit – will receive $9.5 million of the budget, up from $9 million last year.

Also included in the FY'85 budget is $30,000 to continue for six months the Demonstration Program for young handicapped individuals in the Greater Springfield and Northampton/Amherst area.

There is also funding for a new bus route in Northampton, servicing Florence Heights and other low income housing projects.

PVTA was able to meet rising costs due to the carryover of federal money from previous years. Transit officials predict a much tougher budget year in FY'86, when the PVTA will no longer have federal funds to carry over.

PVTA Advisory Board Chairman Leonard M. Wagner, center, shows off the award winning certificate the Transit Authority received for its TV commercial, "The Way to Go to Work." Shown with Wagner are Susan G. Fentin, president of Fentin Advertising agency and Robert D. Manz, PVTA Administrator.

PVTA Takes Top Award . . .

(continued from page 1)

attempting to attract new riders. While it is difficult to measure the impact of a TV commercial on ridership, this award points out that PVTA is becoming a recognizably positive entity in the Pioneer Valley," said PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz.

"We are going to continue to concentrate our efforts to attract new riders while at the same time improve the service we provide," Manz said.

PVTA Assistant to the Administrator Stephen A. Gazillo – director of public relations – said more efforts are underway to capture new riders through improved marketing techniques.

"Since I've worked at PVTA, I've been impressed with the quality of the product we have to offer," he said. "I think we owe it to the general public and the taxpayers to inform them of our capabilities. Our marketing efforts in large measure serve that purpose."

ACC Craftfair

More than 630 passengers were transported by PVTA buses during the first American Crafts Council Craftfair held in West Springfield in June.

PVTA provided special bus service from five area hotels and the Amtrak station in Springfield to the fair grounds at the Big E in West Springfield.

This represents the first cooperative effort with Springfield's Convention and Visitor's Bureau, according to PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz, and is "hopefully the start of many years of transit service to conventions and events organized by the Convention Bureau."

From The Safety Corner

If we were to take an opinion poll of all professional drivers and ask the question, "what is the most unpredictable area of any city?", a large percentage of answers would be INTERSECTIONS.

Some intersections are more hazardous and unpredictable than others. Conditions surrounding intersections determine the probability of there being a high accident area. Some intersections connect heavy traffic flow arteries. Others connect more than the normal two streets. Still others receive high pedestrial and cycle use.

The defensive driver will approach all intersections prepared for the unexpected to happen.

Busy intersections should be approached at a slower than normal rate of speed. Never pass another vehicle at an intersection, unless that vehicle is disabled, and then, only when you are able to make certain that you can safely complete the pass.

If your view is blocked by a large vehicle, tree or building, stop until you are certain that entering the intersection will not cause you to become a hazard which would produce an accident or cause personal injury.

Remember, your passengers are depending on you to transport them safely to their destination. Don't let them down!!

This article was written by William J. McCullough, Safety Coordinator for PVTA

HCC REJECTS TRANSIT PROPOSAL

By a 63-28 vote, Holyoke Community College students have rejected a proposal that could have put transit on the right track in an area where ridership is poor.

The proposal would have provided unlimited ridership on 10 PVTA routes to all full-time HCC students, in exchange for a $20 annual fee from each student.

PVTA officials had agreed to upgrade service to the college if students approved the plan, modeled after a successful program at Westfield State College.

The Authority provides half-hour service to the college. Routes 202, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 211, 212, 217 and 221 would have been opened to college students, and service directly from Springfield would have been extended to the campus.

"We're disappointed in the poor participation," said PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz, of the vote. "If in the future our funding is cutback further, service to areas like HCC, where ridership is poor, could be affected. This proposal could have prevented that."

Plans are to submit another proposal in the fall.

Braille Bus Schedules Ready

The Massachusetts Association for the Blind and the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority have begun offering Braille, large print and cassette tape versions of bus schedules for blind and visually impaired people.

At a recent press conference, PVTA officials unveiled the area's first braille bus schedules and discussed programs now underway to improve transit service for visually impaired individuals.

According to Jan Frost, supervisor of volunteer services for the Massachusetts Association for the Blind in Springfield, the new schedules are a prototype for others in the future.

"What's important to realize," Mrs. Frost said, "is that only 10% of all blind persons use braille. We need to take this as just a stepping stone and begin to incorporate other techniques to make public transportation more accessible to the blind."

Among other techniques that should be utilized are tape-recorded schedules and schedules enlarged several times for visually impaired persons, Mrs. Frost said. Both methods are now being offered upon request at PVTA's Information Center.

PVTA Assistant to the Administrator Stephen A. Gazillo said in addition to the efforts currently underway, bus drivers have been educated about problems blind persons encounter that many people take for granted.

"I think this shows that PVTA is strongly committed to helping handicapped individuals," Gazillo said.

New PVTA Officers

At its annual meeting June 27, the PVTA Advisory Board elected new officers for fiscal year 1985, which runs from July 1 to June 30.

The new chairman is Michael L. Laverdiere, the city planning director of Holyoke who has served as chairman of the Finance Committee and is a past chairman of the board. He replaces Leonard Wagner of West Springfield, who was chairman in FY'84.

Elected vice chairman was Jim Lindstrom, director of Administration and Planning for the Town of Amherst.

From The Administrator's Desk

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority and all of its operators are moving on a steady course toward becoming the best transit operation in New England, if not the Northeast. This takes dedication and perserverance.

As this comes to fruition, we will be under pressure to retain our excellence and continue to improve during the next two years, as our capital programs are being completed. The dedication of every employee is required to maintain our current standing, now and in the future, especially with all the pressures directed toward transit.

Our future growth is tied to excellent service, attracting people to our population centers and developing new markets of students and visitors. The employees of transit are the key to achieving this success. Let's not forget that they also will reap the benefits.

This time of year, as you know, is the budget season, and after three years of adequate funding, we now face shortfalls in FY'86. With stable local, state and federal funding, we should be fully funded for FY'85.

For FY'86, the picture is less certain. We will undoubtedly need to generate more revenue, since we cannot expect our tax revenues (federal, state and local support) to pick up a bigger share of the budget than they currently do at 70%. If we were to simply raise fares, however, I think we would be making a mistake. In the end, we would lose some routes and our revenue would not increase appreciably even though there would be a reduction in expenses.

I believe the answer to this dilemma is to bring more people to transit in the core areas, such as downtown Springfield, Holyoke and Chicopee, and to contract for more college and primary school student programs. Along with working on efficiencies, this will be a major goal in FY'85.

Bob Manz
Administrator

PVTA board members listen intently as Financial Officer Cynthia Landers discusses the benefits of the Authority's new Management Information System. Looking on, from left to right, are Michael Laverdiere from Holyoke; Richard Phelps, Wilbraham; Leonard Wagner, West Springfield; Scott Gibbs, Chicopee; and Jim Lindstrom, Amherst. Installation of the MIS computer software is proceeding as scheduled.

ROADEO WINNERS NAMED . . .

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority has announced the winners of its third annual bus roadeo competition held recently at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Topping a field of more than 40 drivers for the second year in a row was Truman R. Easton, who scored 606 points out of a possible 750. For his winning effort, Easton was awarded a trophy, a check for $250 as well as an expense-paid trip to the International Bus Roadeo to be held later this year in Washington, D.C. Easton, a driver for Springfield Transit Management, Inc., placed fourth in last year's International Bus Roadeo in Denver, Colorado.

Placing second this year with 556 points was Ramon Castro, a driver for Holyoke Street Railway Company. Castro won $125 and a trophy.

Third place finisher with 545 points was Ronald Paquette of STM, Inc. Paquette won $100 and a trophy. Fourth and fifth place went to Greg Caetano of UMass Transit Service, who had 540 points, and Ronald Benoit of STM, who had 535 points. Both men won $100 and a trophy for their efforts.

The winners of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's third annual bus roadeo are, from right to left, Truman Easton of Springfield Transit Management, first place; Ramon Castro of Holyoke Street Railway, second place; Ronald Paquette of STM, third place; and Greg Caetano of U Mass Transit Service, fourth place. Also pictured is Barry Kriger, far left, winner of PVTA's first Media Roadeo. Kriger represented WWLP Channel 22 TV station.

This year also marked the first time PVTA sponsored a Media Roadeo. Reporters from two local newspapers and a television station drove the 35-foot RTS bus through a portion of the course as part of efforts to familiarize reporters with the job of bus drivers.

Winning the Media Roadeo was Barry Kriger of Channel 22. Other participants include Deborah McDermott of the Daily Hampshire Gazette and John Appleton of The Morning Union.

Wrote Ms. McDermott: "The moral of my tale is this: Be nice to bus drivers. They deserve it."

James Kennedy Is Tops In Safety . . .

James Kennedy, a driver for Springfield Transit Management, Inc., has been honored by the PVTA for having completed 36 years of bus driving without a chargeable accident.

Kennedy was honored recently at the annual PVTA Safety Brunch held at the Holiday Inn in Holyoke. He received a gift certificate for two to the Yankee Pedlar Inn, as well as a safety pin commemorating his perfect record.

Kennedy, a Belchertown resident, started driving in Springfield for the former Springfield Street Railway Co. in August, 1947. He now drives the State/Boston Road line.

Asked to pass on some helpful advice to other drivers, Kennedy noted the following:

"I try to foresee situations before they develop into an incident which then becomes an accident," he said.

He also noted that drivers should make special efforts to avoid stress, since that often leads to careless driving. Since he has been driving through downtown Springfield during the past few years, he said he has been forced to be more alert.

"It's like driving through a daily obstacle course on Main Street," he said, "because of all the construction."

The 62-year-old Kennedy said he plans to retire in November and travel with his wife, June. The couple has four children, Sharon, Kathy, Barbara Lee and Jimmy.

James Kennedy, a driver at Springfield Transit Management, Inc., has logged thousands of miles over the past 36 years without an accident. Congratulations, Jim, and keep up the good work!

MASS. Y3. PVTA1: 3/9

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

InTransit

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Edited by Stephen A. Gazillo

Issue No 9
January 1985

PVTA'S PROGRAM FOR DISABLED GETS HIGH MARKS FROM USERS

About 50 disabled people in Amherst attended PVTA's public meeting on the Transportation Demonstration Project for handicapped persons under 60 years of age. Everyone attending voiced support for the program.

PVTA's trial program to operate van service in the Springfield and Amherst/Northampton areas for disabled people under the age of 60 was termed a huge success at four public meetings held late last year.

More than 80 disabled people turned out for the meetings held at the Springfield Civic Center, Northampton City Council Chambers and the Bang's Community Center in Amherst.

The meetings were conducted to determine whether there was support for continuing the special transit service on a permanent basis.

Since January, 1984, PVTA has operated the Transit Demonstration Project to address the needs of disabled people who could not ride regular buses and who needed regularly scheduled transportation to get to work or to school.

The PVTA Advisory Board's sub-committee on elderly and handicapped transit service has been studying future funding of the program. A final recommendation is expected at either the January or February board meeting.

Letters and the final report discussing the success of the program and the need for its continuation have been sent to Federal Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole, Urban Mass Transportation Administration director Ralph Stanley, Governor Michael Dukakis, as well as senators, congressmen, and other transportation officials.

Northampton Garage To Include Day Care Facility

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority has received a federal grant of more than $1 million to build a 20-bus storage and maintenance garage in the City of Northampton.

The facility—which will house PVTA buses operated by Western Mass. Bus Lines—will also include a 1000-square foot public day care center, thereby marking an innovative first for transit authorities across the country.

U.S. Rep. Silvio O. Conte, in announcing the grant, said the new garage "will significantly improve the operating efficiency and reduce the operating cost of buses" in the Greater Northampton area.

"With the help of these funds, and certain additional money that the state provides, I know that Bob Manz and the rest of the PVTA team will be continuing to provide safe, reliable, and effective transit service at an affordable price to all users," Conte said.

Construction of the garage is expected to begin in the spring of 1985 and will cost an estimated $1.4 million, according to PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz.

The PVTA Advisory Board in November approved inclusion of the day care center as a service to both bus drivers and the general community. An independent agency will be under contract with the City of Northampton to provide the day care service—which will be large enough for 18-20 pre-schoolers and toddlers.

The bus garage will be built on a 3.5 acre parcel in the Northampton Industrial Park. Construction should take approximately six months and will support between 75-100 jobs.

Steiger's To Have Area's First EPI System

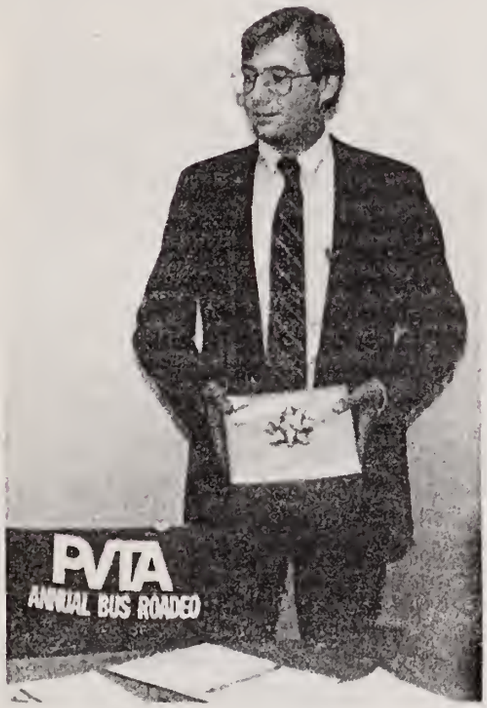
Installation of the area's first electronic passenger information system is expected to take place at Steiger's Department Store at the end of January.

Passengers boarding at Steiger's will have up-to-the-minute information on bus schedules, which will be displayed on computer-controlled tv screen. The project began a year ago, when PVTA agreed to hire Vista Systems, Inc. of Princeton, N.J., to develop a low-cost, efficient method of providing schedule information via computers.

Vista personnel have now trained PVTA's Information Center staff how to develop the schedules and display them on computer monitors. The monitors will display the schedules on a 24-hour basis, so that a passenger seeking information at 9 AM will have all the relevant bus schedules at his/her disposal.

"This project addresses a need that has existed for a long time," said PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz. Manz said timely transit information at key bus stops like Steiger's has been virtually non-existent. Passengers have been forced to seek out supervisors on the street or otherwise call PVTA's Information Center.

Once the Steiger's installation is complete, PVTA plans to install other monitors at Baystate West. An interactive terminal is planned for inside the mall that will enable passengers to ask the computer questions such as "how do I travel to Eastfield Mall by bus?" Morse Shoe store has also agreed to installation of one of the monitors.



Past PVTA Chairman Leonard Wagner of West Springfield expresses thanks for gifts bestowed him for his service to the authority.

PVTA's Information Center staff (standing from left to right: Mari Burns, Carol Hess and Mary Commisso) receive training on the EPI System from Jim Lindemer of Vista.

"Employee of the Year" nominations

PVTA is currently accepting nominations for its annual "Employee of the Year" award to be announced by the administrator early in '85.

Anyone interested in submitting names of potential candidates should send information to: Robert D. Manz, Administrator; PVTA; 1365 Main Street; Springfield, MA 01103.

Information should include reasons why the individual deserves the award and other relevant details that would support the nomination.

Criteria used to make the award are based on an individual's dedication and professional approach in performing duties related to the transit industry above and beyond what is required by the PVTA.

Best Wishes for a
Happy New Year

Repairs Set For UMass Garage

PVTA has hired Robert W. Hall Consulting Engineers Inc. of Agawam to investigate and recommend repairs of building problems at the UMass Transit Facility.

The Advisory Board in November approved an $11,500 contract with the engineering firm to correct a series of long standing problems at the facility.

The problems include malfunctioning of the bus wash equipment, an imbalanced thermostat in storage area's heating system, a problem with the door operation and the need for a wind screen at the northwest corner of the building.

PVTA Finance Committee Chairman Jim Lindstrom of Amherst reported to the board the need for the improvements and noted that money to pay for them would come from previously allocated UMass Transit grants.

From the Administrator's Desk

This is the season to recount our blessings for the year that has drawn to a close and look forward to the year ahead.

We have been fortunate to continue our slow, steady growth and have sufficient funds to do so. The PVTA family and its service continues to gain respect for its contribution to the quality of life in the Pioneer Valley.

1985 however, has to be a year of increased efficiency in light of a proposal by the federal government to reduce operating assistance to virtually nothing. PVTA is committed to waging a tough battle against these cutbacks, to writing to our congressmen and to supporting our lobbying groups in Washington. In the meantime, we need to find new ridership groups and plan for a dramatic increase with the opening of the new Monarch complex.

This has to be a team effort, and as such the first line—the operators and mechanics—is the most important. With a team of good drivers, maintenance crews and management, I am convinced we can meet the tough challenges we face in the coming year. The PVTA staff will do everything it can to work with you to insure that the respect that we have earned stays and grows in the years to come.

May you and your family have a Happy and Safe 1985!

Robert D. Manz

Robert D. Manz.
Administrator

I-391 Express Given Permanent Status

At its November meeting, the PVTA Advisory Board unanimously approved permanent express service between Holyoke and Springfield.

The I-391 Express began as a trial service in the spring of 1984, at the request of the Bank of Boston. Bank officials agreed to subsidize bus passes for their employees who commuted between the two cities.

Ridership on the I-391 Express has been steady since its inception.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said ridership should grow in the future as both downtown Springfield and Holyoke continue plans for construction and renovation.

With this service, passengers can travel by bus between the two cities in about 15 minutes. PVTA operates two trips in the morning and two in the afternoon. A new schedule is being prepared and will be available by mid-January.

U.S. Rep. Silvio O. Conte, (center) R-Pittsfield presents a check for $1,050,000 from the Federal government to build PVTA's Northampton Transit Facility. The facility will house a daycare center for 18-20 preschoolers and toddlers. With Conte are, from left to right, PVTA Administrator Robert Manz, UMTA Region I Administrator Richard Doyle, Northampton Mayor David Musante, and PVTA Advisory Board Chairman Michael Laverdiere.

The Future is Riding on Us.

From the Safety Corner

Safety With Pride

Safety is a product that is produced by using **Pride** as the key ingredient. As professional drivers, our day should begin with a desire to perform without a mishap. This can be accomplished by demonstrating, through attitude and driving habits, to everyone we come in contact with, that we are concerned with their well being.

Begin the day by extending to your family and friends a courteous friendly greeting, if they are riding in your personal auto give them a safe comfortable ride. This develops a good personal attitude which will reflect in the performance of your work. When you are driving a bus and stop for a passenger, you are extending an invitation to that person to come in, feel safe, and secure.

While the passenger is on your bus, demonstrate the professional ability that delivers the passenger safely to his/her destination. When this task is accomplished you will have a sense of PRIDE in knowing that you have performed with a degree of professionalism.

The word **PRIDE** is the key ingredient when safety is the desired product.

"P" Professional
"R" Results
"I" In
"D" Daily
"E" Endeavors

Professional Results In Daily Endeavors.

William J. McCullough
Safety Coordinator for the PVTA

Burger King Promotion Hailed A Success

PVTA's Token sales increased by 40% in the month of October, due to a strong promotion between the Transit Authority and the Burger King Corporation.

During the month of October, PVTA customers were treated to a free breakfast at Burger King and were given a free token when they purchased a token ten-pack at any PVTA sales outlet.

PVTA's objective in the promotion was to increase sales of bus tokens, while Burger King officials said they wished to promote their new breakfast item, the "Croissan'wich."

After a brief, one-month period of negotiations, Burger King agreed to offer the $1.31 breakfast item free to those who purchased the token ten-pack. To boost the promotion further, PVTA agreed to offer a free token, worth a 55-cent bus fare.

PVTA's marketing director Stephen Gazillo said the offer was one of the strongest ever worked out between a large fast-food chain like Burger King and a transit authority.

Burger King agreed to purchase bus advertising signs for a three-month period. The company also produced tray liners and counter cards to advertise the offer in the 14 participating restaurants. PVTA promoted sales using radio advertising and inside-the-bus cards mounted in all PVTA buses.

"We're very happy with the results of this campaign," said PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz. "Both the Transit Authority and Burger King have achieved positive results from this program, and I'm sure we'll see more good news in the future."

Burger King officials said sales of the "Croissan'wich" were climbing, due in large measure to the bus advertising and promotion.

New Policy On Strollers and Baby Carriages

PVTA has printed a bilingual notice to passengers alerting them to safety and courtesy procedures to follow when they board with baby carriages, strollers or collapsible carts.

"Until recently, there was no published policy to help passengers boarding with baby carriages. This led to some confusion, and sometimes there were inconveniences to other passengers," PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said.

The policy, given to all drivers to distribute as necessary, is published in both Spanish and English. It reads as follows:

"Whenever you board a bus with a stroller, baby carriage or collapsible food cart, you may do so by the front door if the unit is collapsed and by the rear door if it is not. Whenever possible the child is to be held and the carriage or stroller collapsed. Please keep control of the unit at all times. Please do not place the unit in the aisle in front of the rear door, as this blocks passengers who want to get off."

"Your compliance with this policy makes bus riding safer for everyone. If you do not comply with this request you will not be allowed to board the bus."

"The PVTA is firmly committed to providing convenient, safe and comfortable bus service for all its passengers. Please help us by following this simple procedure."

MASS. Y3. PVTA1:3/10

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

InTransit

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Edited by Stephen A. Gazillo

Issue No. 10
Summer, 1985

UNDERWAY—Springfield Mayor Richard E. Neal readies the jackhammer to begin construction on Phase II of improvements to the Springfield Transit Facility. Attending the ceremony with Neal are, from left, City Councilor Mary Montori; Rosemarie Esquivel, civil rights director for UMTA Region I; Wayne Dorsett, representing Eastern General Contractors; Michael Laverdiere, chairman of the PVTA advisory board; City Councilor William Foley; Neal; Thomas Foley, aide to U.S. Rep. Edward P. Boland (D-Mass.); State Rep. Athan Catjakis; and PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz.

PVTA TO MAINTAIN FARES AND INCREASE SERVICE

"But new budget allows for 10% cut in federal funds"

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.—The largest regional transit system in Massachusetts is meeting the challenge of potential cutbacks in federal funding with a bold new budget plan that will not raise fares, but actually increase levels of service in the coming year.

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Advisory Board has adopted an $11.7 million fiscal 1986 operating budget, a 2.6 percent increase over current spending.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said the spending package, drawn up by the Finance Committee, and effective July 1, allows for up to a 10 percent cut in federal funding, and level funding from the state and participating local communities. Manz warned, however, that deeper cuts in federal funding would offset the financial progress the Authority has made.

Finance Committee Chairman James Lindstrom, in presenting the package to the full Board, said the budget "promoted everything the Authority wants to do".

(continued on p. 2)

Bus Roadeo Winners Lauded

Five drivers were recently honored for their performance in PVTA's fifth annual Bus Roadeo.

Ramon Castro, first place finisher in the driving and safety skills competition, received a check for $250 and a first place trophy. Castro, who will represent the PVTA in the International Bus Roadeo to be held in Los Angeles in October, is a driver for Holyoke Street Railway Co.

Truman Easton, who in the two previous years placed first in the competition, received a check for $125 for his second place effort. Easton is a driver for Springfield Transit Management, Inc.

(continued on p. 4)

Ramon Castro, center is congratulated by outgoing PVTA Advisory Board Chairman Michael Laverdiere, for having finished first in PVTA's annual bus roadeo. Castro will now compete in the international bus roadeo in Los Angeles. Looking on is PVTA Administrator Robert Manz.

From the Safety Corner

Prerequisites Of A Bus Operator

I received a telephone complaint from a lady who stated that she had taken her first ride on a PVTA bus and was not too happy with her experience. She stated that the driver was the most surly individual she had ever met.

After speaking with the lady, I checked the files and found letters of appreciation written by passengers who had observed PVTA Bus Operators giving the little extra which makes the difference in good or bad service.

I am convinced, that the percentage of Bus Operators, who give the little extra, is far greater than those who do not.

I gave the situation some thought and decided to send a message to the Operators who do not perform as professionals, which follows:

Providing efficient transportation for a community is a most essential business. Those engaged in it are performing a public service second to none. This fact should be uppermost in the mind of each PVTA Bus Operator.

You should never forget that you are a public servant, responsible for the safety and comfort of those who use our service.

You have a great responsibility, the passengers you carry look to you for a very personal and necessary need, **Transportation.**

If you are a good public servant, you will be courteous, neat in appearance, careful in the performance of your duties, and always on the alert for an opportunity to render an extra measure of service. Your work is exacting, it calls for patience and resourcefulness. Demonstration of these qualities is essential for a Bus Operator of the PVTA.

Remember, what you do reflects on everyone in your profession.

You are a professional, perform your duties with pride. You will have a sense of personal satisfaction for your effort.

William J. McCullough

William McCullough,
Safety Supervisor

PVTA To Maintain Fares And Increase Service

Eastern General Contractors President John Murphy, left, and PVTA Administrator Robert Manz, look over construction work on Phase II of renovations to the Springfield Transit Facility. The $2 million project is expected to be complete by late fall.

(continued from p.1)

"It keeps local assessments the same and copes with a modest federal cut. We've also added service we thought was important," Lindstrom said.

The Finance Committee calculated the approved budget on receiving $1.9 million in federal funds, while last year federal assistance totaled almost $2.1 million.

"This budget is the result of long range planning that allows us to get through the lean years in excellent shape," Manz said.

Passenger fares will remain 55 cents for one zone rides, and 15 cents for the next two zones, with a ceiling price of 85 cents per trip.

PVTA plans to expand service in the Northampton-Amherst-Hadley area by adding two new routes to local colleges. Also, access to service for the handicapped will be upgraded to include trips to social events on weekends. Those riders already have access to door-to-door transit during weekday working hours, and some weekend times.

To help boost revenue, PVTA intends to upgrade its marketing efforts and expand its prepaid college transit programs in the Fall of 1985. One of the region's largest community colleges, Holyoke Community College, approved a prepaid transit program that will allow its 2500 day students to ride PVTA buses in the area for $20 per academic year.

Coupled with the operating budget is a $4 million capital improvement program that is part of a five-year plan to upgrade PVTA's equipment and facilities. Highlights of the program include renovation of the Springfield Transit Facility, purchase of ten new 40-foot buses, and construction of the Northampton Transit Facility.

Manz called the capital program "extensive and significant for the taxpayers in the region, as the improvements in transit facilities will lead to greater efficiency in the future".

"We are continuing our lobbying efforts in Washington as Congress battles over the budget. The future of federal transit funding is uncertain at best, though a cutback of 10-20% seems likely. The FY'86 budget approved by the PVTA Advisory Board plans for a 10% cut and still allows us to establish and maintain essential programs. By any standard, it is one of the best budgets ever prepared by the Finance Committee, and members of that committee should be commended for their work".

Thanks from a rider...

April 16, 1985

Dear PVTA:

Writing this note to praise the PVTA. I take the bus every day to work. The bus driver is kind and polite. Even the people that wait for the bus every day with me are friendly and nice.

Every Saturday I take the bus to church and also I take the bus to the doctor every six months.

It's a pleasant experience to wait for the bus. Keep up the good work.

A satisfied customer.
Helen Papuga

PVTA Hires Intern To Oversee Construction Activity

The PVTA has hired a civil engineering intern to record construction activities taking place at the Springfield Transit Facility.

John Shevlin, a senior at the University of Massachusetts, is spending his summer observing the details in PVTA's two million dollar renovation of its largest bus storage and maintenance facility.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said Shevlin is preparing a written record of all construction activity in order to evaluate progress.

"What's significant," Manz said, "is that John's gaining valuable hands-on experience in the field while helping us keep track of the project on a day to day basis. With this type of internship, I think we're demonstrating to area colleges that the transit industry can serve as a valuable educational tool to their students."

Shevlin, a 22-year-old Holyoke, Mass., native, termed the work "great experience."

"I couldn't learn this in the classroom. When I graduate, I plan to work within the field of transportation. This work is helping me get a better perspective of structural procedures," he said.

Shevlin will return to UMass in the fall and expects to graduate in December.

The construction project is funded by the federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration, with 20 percent of the funding coming from the state and local communities.

From The Administrator's Desk

As a new fiscal year is underway, it seems an appropriate time to look forward to what is planned and what we hope to accomplish by the end of 1986.

Our major capital improvement program is now within sight of completion. Our bus fleet will be updated by the end of FY86. Our facilities will be significantly improved, with the Springfield Transit Facility completed during FY86 and the Northampton Transit Facility completed by the end of 1986. We can also look to improvements at the UMass Transit Facility to be complete by the end of 1987. This meets our capital improvement timetable. When finished, we can expend more effort on the other needs of the riding public. We will expand and coordinate Authority-wide training programs, improve all facets of our public information programs and continue to study the shifts and growths in population so that transit can keep abreast of the public's needs.

We have not ignored our most valuable assests, riders and employees, during this period of capital improvement. While we have not been able to dedicate sufficient time to their needs, we have implemented a program—through efficiencies and savings—to maintain service and fares into the near future, thereby guaranteeing transit service and jobs.

Robert D. Manz

Bob Manz
Administrator

Chicopee Council On Aging Receives New PVTA Van

The PVTA recently awarded a new lift-equipped van to the Chicopee Council on Aging.

Mayor Richard Lak, Chicopee Council on Aging Director Shelley Modell, Chicopee COA Chairman Betty O'Connel' [illegible] Chairman Michael Laverdiere, Board Member Bob Gagnon and, PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz attended.

Ms. Modell said the new van is being used to provide special transportation service to anyone in Chicopee who is 60 or older or disabled.

The Council's drivers are all volunteers, while funds to operate the PVTA van have been raised by the Friends of Chicopee Senior Citizens, Inc., and the Chicopee Senior Travel Club, according to Ms. Modell.

PVTA Administrator Robert Manz (right) congratulates outgoing Advisory Board Chairman Michael Laverdiere for his outstanding efforts in helping to promote public transit in the Pioneer Valley. Laverdiere has twice served as board chairman and has been active on numerous PVTA committees.

A new van was awarded to the Chicopee Council on Aging in a special ceremony at Chicopee City Hall. From left to right, Chicopee COA Chairman Betty O'Connell, Mayor Richard Lak, PVTA Advisory Board Chairman Michael Laverdiere, and Chicopee COA Executive Director Shelley Modell.

SANTANELLO HONORED—Gabriel J. Santanello, left, is this year's recipient of the annual Administrator's Award to the PVTA employee who has made outstanding contributions to the improvement of the region's transit system through everyday work. At right is Administrator Robert Manz.

Three New Staff Members Join PVTA

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz recently announced the appointment of three new members to the administrative staff.

Marlene B. Connor has been named executive assistant to the 23-community regional transit system in western Massachusetts. Ms. Connor will be responsible for grant writing, bid procedures, contracts, equipment inventory as well as overseeing PVTA's van operations for the elderly and handicapped.

She was previously employed as a transportation planner for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. Ms. Connor is a graduate of Drew University in Madison, New Jersey.

Named to the position of assistant financial officer is **Kevin J. Lebo**, who was employed by PVTA as its operations planner in charge of installation of its new management information system (MIS).

Mr. Lebo is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts and has worked as an intern for the Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT). In his new position, he will assist the financial officer in accounting, as well as reporting information required by federal, state and municipal governments. He will also continue to provide technical assistance for MIS operations.

Appointed to the position of executive secretary is **Karen Moynihan.** Ms. Moynihan was previously employed by Gilbane Building Company of Providence, R.I. She is a graduate of Holyoke Community College with a major in executive and legal secretarial skills. Ms. Moynihan was also elected clerk of the Advisory Board at its annual meeting in June.

New PVTA Chairman Says Funding Is Authority's Biggest Challenge

James Lindstrom, Director of Administration and Planning for the Town of Amherst, Massachusetts has been named Chairman of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Advisory Board for fiscal year 1986.

Lindstrom joined the Authority in April, 1983 and has been an active member, serving most recently as Chairman of the Finance Committee.

A graduate of Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, he holds a Master's Degree in business from Stanford University in California. He has considerable interest in public transit and in the participation of local communities in decision-making processes that affect transit service.

The most significant issue facing the PVTA is that of wrestling with the funding question, Lindstrom said, referring to the proposed cutbacks in federal funding.

"While it is not an immediate threat, it is a long range one that we cannot afford to ignore," he said.

Lindstrom said he also hopes to see more programs developed to attract ridership.

"To lure people out of their automobiles and onto the buses, we need to make sure that the quality of service is maintained, that we have an adequate fleet, and that transit service is comfortable, affordable and provided on a timely basis," he said.

In addition to these issues, he has voiced support for the newly established transportation service for handicapped persons under 60 years of age.

"I'm pleased with the FY '86 budget. It keeps local assessments the same and copes with a modest federal cut. We have also added service in areas we thought were important, such as the service for the handicapped."

Serving as Vice Chairman of the Board in FY '86 is David Moriarty, Planning Director for the City of Springfield. Elected to the position of Clerk was Karen Moynihan, who joined the PVTA staff in May.

Briefs

During a recent appearance on Michael Dobbs' radio talk show on WREB in Holyoke, PVTA Director of Marketing and Public Relations, Stephen Gazillo, noted that the majority of calls were from listeners who praised PVTA bus drivers.

"It made me especially proud to hear more than once that our drivers are courteous, alert and congenial with passengers. That's really where our public relations efforts begin," Gazillo said.

Next spring PVTA will base its "Driver of the Year" award on public opinion as well as an evaluation from PVTA carriers and the administration.

ROADEO WINNERS *(continued from p.1)*

Placing third in the competition and receiving a check for $100 was Kevin Keegan; fourth place went to William Cranshaw and fifth place to Leonard Houle. Both received a check for $100 and a trophy.

MASS. Y3.PVTA1 : 3/11

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

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The cast of PVTA's new television commercial sing and dance their way aboard a PVTA bus. The 30-second spot, produced in conjunction with Fentin Advertising and Harvest Moon Productions, Ltd., debuted on western Massachusetts television this past fall.

Advertising and Promotions Pay Off!

PVTA's award winning advertising program took off in 1985, and more excitement is planned for 1986.

The highlight of the year occurred when PVTA's catchy radio jingle garnered first place nationally in the American Public Transit Association's annual Ad Wheel competition.

The PVTA also drew accolades when it sponsored the first ever "Ride the Bus" Sweepstakes, a promotion that attracted more than 15,000 entrants and sparked an average 4% ridership increase throughout the fare-paying system.

A new television commercial was produced in August by Harvest Moon Productions in association with the PVTA and Fentin Advertising. Eye-catching billboards drew motorists' attention on Interstate 391 between Holyoke and Springfield and in Chicopee, and the annual transit promotion offering discount packages to the fairgrounds of the Big E was an overwhelming success as more riders than ever boarded the Big E Express buses.

"Our objective is to be visible, to continually increase awareness of our services and to attract market segments that will boost ridership and revenue," said Stephen A. Gazillo, director of marketing and public relations.

"We've conducted a marketing survey that will help us plan appropriately for the coming fiscal year, and we're enthusiastic about some of the promotions planned for early 1986."

(continued on p.4)

PVTA IS ON THE MOVE!

As 1986 begins, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is moving toward completion of a five-year, $12.5 million capital improvement program that will insure growth and stability in the region's public transit system for decades to come.

In releasing the fiscal year 1985 Annual Report, PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said area residents will continue to enjoy quality transit service and will also notice improvements.

"We have been working to improve all aspects of our transit system, from the vehicles we put into service and the buildings they're housed in to the schedules they run on and their overall on-time performance," Manz said.

The list of PVTA's accomplishments during the past five years is substantial, he said.

"Probably our most significant project has been to transform a turn-of-the-century, outmoded streetcar garage into an ultra-modern, efficient transit facility serving the Greater Springfield area," Manz said, referring to the $4.9 million reconstruction of the Springfield Transit Facility.

In the northern district, groundbreaking ceremonies were held in November, 1985, to mark the beginning of construction of the Northampton Transit Facility. The $1.45 million, 20-bus garage will also house a public day care center for 18-20 pre-school children. Improvements are also planned for the UMass Transit Facility.

PVTA's fleet of transit vehicles has also undergone significant change. Since 1980, the transit authority has purchased 15 40-foot GMC buses, 21 40-foot Grumman Flxibles, seven 15-passenger buses and is planning to buy ten more 40-foot vehicles from the

(continued on p.2)

From the Safety Corner

A Bus Operator

I often wonder if the public is aware of the time, effort and training required for a person to become a bus operator.

After application, testing, selection and hiring, a period of training is mandatory. The training period will determine if a person can comfortably perform as a bus operator. The student driver is given instructions on the safe operation of a bus. Training is conducted in the classroom and on the road. The hours are varied and can begin as early as 4:45 AM. Night hours are included in the training as the operators' working hours will vary according to the job assigned.

Classroom instructions consist of films, traffic quizzes, radio training, general operational procedures, and the fundamentals of bus driving.

Driving instruction is performed in the bus while trainee is driving. Defensive driving techniques are presented. The trainee receives sensitivity training which includes being placed in the position of others and acting out the roll of a passenger. Public relations is difficult to present in a class situation so each trainee is required to drive, under supervision, and perform the duties of a bus operator.

When all phases of training are completed, a series of written tests are given and those who successfully complete the training process are assigned to the roster and perform duties on a trial basis. If the trainee performs well and is accepted as a permanent operator, he/she will experience training periods or road observation for the duration of employment.

If you are a bus operator you are a well trained professional, drive with pride. If you read this article as a passenger, you will understand that the bus operator of today is well trained, concerned with your safety and conditioned to consider your well-being while riding a PVTA Bus.

William J. McCullough
Safety Coordinator

Marketing Director Stephen A. Gazillo, right, receives PVTA's first place award in the American Public Transit Association's annual Ad Wheel competition, for radio advertising by a medium-sized transit system. At left is APTA Chairman Warren H. Frank.

Marketing Director Accepts New Position

Stephen A. Gazillo, director of marketing and public relations at Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, has resigned to accept the position of Manager of Special Operations at New Jersey Transit Rail Operations, Inc., effective January 6, 1986.

Gazillo joined the PVTA staff in January, 1983, after working as a reporter for the *Transcript-Telegram* in Holyoke.

"I have really enjoyed working at PVTA and am proud of our accomplishments. I know I'll miss all the good people I've had the fortune to work with and for," he said.

N.J. Transit is a state-run organization which oversees one of the nation's largest commuter rail and bus systems. In his new position, Gazillo will be responsible for promoting off-peak service and special operations in the rail system, as well as working on such issues as whether or not the state should create a rail museum.

On the Move...

Neoplan Corp. Nine older (1966-68) GMC buses have been rebuilt, and plans are underway to rebuild ten more. PVTA has also purchased 15 1985 model Ford vans, equipped with wheelchair lifts to serve the disabled and elderly population. Service vehicles were also purchased, enabling quick response to road calls, potential accidents and other emergencies that might arise.

To improve its information services, an Information Center was opened in downtown Springfield in 1980, and now receives more than 500 calls daily from customers throughout the Pioneer Valley. A computerized customer information system has also been developed and is being installed at bus stops adjacent to high density boarding areas.

Improving efficiency has been a primary goal of the five-year plan, and numerous changes were made to reduce overall operating expenses. New electronic fareboxes and fare counting equipment were installed, and a computerized Management Information System (MIS) has been implemented.

Transit service in the region—despite significant reductions in federal funding levels—remained stable since 1980. Routes were streamlined in the Holyoke area, and express service was added between that city and its nearby neighbor, Springfield. A program for the disabled population under 60 years of age was established on a permanent basis, and now offers transportation to and from work for young disabled persons. A bus route was started in Northampton that connects the Florence Heights housing project with the city's downtown area. Operated on a fare-free basis, it is financed through a public/private cooperative effort involving the City of Northampton, social service agencies and private developers.

"If you look at the total picture, PVTA is rapidly becoming one of the best transit systems in the country," Manz said. "We will continue to do everything possible to make this region a showplace for public transit service nationwide."

PVTA Ridership Growth Continues

Ridership aboard PVTA buses increased by another 2% in the first quarter of fiscal year 1986, continuing a record three-year growth rate in the state's largest regional transit authority.

"We experienced a very positive year in fiscal 1985," said Administrator Robert D. Manz. "The fact that first quarter figures this year are above last year's record setting trend is significant."

In the first three months of FY'86, 2,628,578 passengers boarded PVTA buses in the 23-community system, 51,275 more than in FY'85.

Meanwhile, total service miles during the same period decreased by 37,764, or nearly four percent, making the ridership increase that much more impressive, Manz said.

"PVTA will continue its aggressive efforts to improve ridership. As the revitalization of the region's urban centers continues," he said, "there will be a growing demand for transit service."

Thanks from a rider ...

October 31, 1985

Dear Mr. Manz:

This is a long-overdue letter of thanks and appreciation.

I am a regular (card-carrying) PVTA user. The girls at the front desk who provide information and passes are always, consistently, most pleasant, helpful and courteous. When I call for information re particular rides, Eastern States info, the same is true.

You have many excellent drivers—knowledgeable, helpful, courteous. I would like to specifically mention two who drive the busses I regularly ride: Bob, on the Carew to East Springfield—Main & Vernon 4:40 p.m.; and Frank, on the Chicopee Falls—end of the week—Main & Vernon 4:45 p.m. I have watched them minister to the public; they are exemplary PVTA employees, super human beings.

Sincerely,
Marie Fogarty

"From the Administrator's Desk"

1985 has been a good year for PVTA and the people and companies associated with it. Much progress has been made in how our employees do their jobs and in the materials and tools used to accomplish their tasks. I look at the rest of the 80's with optimism for continued growth and improvement. We certainly will get bigger and better as our van operations increase and our operators begin working together in some of their functions. We can't help but get better as our facilities are completed in Springfield and in Northampton, and when the UMass expansion is complete.

We will have to cope with those taking advantage of our good operation. Steve Gazillo leaving for New Jersey Transit is a sign that others recognize our good operation and abilities. The general manager changing at STM will mean some new directions and reassessment of current operations, which should improve conditions.

We need to be cautious of those who see us doing a good job and then thinking it's easy. As we all know, good efforts come from hard work and cooperation.

As the year ends and another begins, we always look back and ahead. Looking back makes us feel confident as we have come a long way in the 80's. Looking ahead is also enjoyable as we can see many improvements and rewards. Some of the positive changes for 1986 include: improved public information displayed on our shelter panels; a new customer information system; improved equipment with our 10 new buses, 10 rebuilt buses and 13 used 1980 Flxibles; labor contracts now in effect with all of our carriers; the new Northampton Transit Facility to be completed and in use; improvements in our fare collection system; better passenger comforts with new shelters at Court Square, Big E and possibly at Bay State West, Steigers, Holyoke City Hall and in Northampton; improvements planned for the UMass Transit Facility, now reaching the bidding stage; a new day care facility at the Northampton Transit Facility; a new bus locator system underway; and most important, we look forward to more people using our service, which is the best compliment we could receive.

Happy New Year.

Robert D. Manz

Bob Manz
Administrator

Eye-catching billboards have become an integral part of PVTA's campaign to draw attention to the convenience of transit service in the Valley.

E & H Operators Discuss Changes

By Marlene Connor, PVTA Executive Assistant

On December 5, 1985, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority sponsored a meeting of its 23 elderly and handicapped van contractors. The meeting was held to keep the operators aware of progress concerning several important issues.

The major focus of the meeting was to discuss how the van operations had changed over the last several years and how they could be expected to change in the next five years. PVTA initiated the discussion to learn what assistance the PVTA staff could provide to the operators. Over the last five years, many operations have changed from the small volunteer-dependent, locally-based operations they once were. Operators are noticing many changes. The population utilizing the services is growing in numbers as well as in their need for more and different services. Operators expressed a need for assistance from PVTA in training, scheduling, dispatching and other areas such as training drivers to become more aware of assisting clients with different disabilities.

In addition, PVTA alerted the operators to the status of federal funding. Section 18 monies which fund the operating portion of the van operations in rural communities are expected to be cut by approximately 9%. Section 9 funding which provides both operating and capital funds for the non-rural communities is expected to be cut in the capital portion, but to be level-funded in the operating portion. It is still not clear how this will affect PVTA communities. PVTA's budget was established anticipating that these cuts would occur.

There was also discussion on the Commonwealth's proposed statewide special needs identification card. Massachusetts is proposing to institute a picture id program enabling all special needs residents of Massachusetts to utilize accessible services in all parts of the state. PVTA already issues id cards for the special needs population in the PVTA district.

Promotions Pay Off...

Gazillo said PVTA's marketing and public relations program has enjoyed considerable success due to "the quality of the product we're advertising."

Future marketing efforts will focus on and include the following: targeted mailing to apartment complexes served by mass transit; more campaigns aimed at increasing transit use amongst college students; promotions involving large private sector companies with a national base; and concentrated messages designed to boost ridership in congested urban areas where parking is limited.

E&H operators meet with PVTA staff to discuss changes in their operations.

Pioneer Valley Kicks Off Construction of Northampton Facility

PVTA officials held a groundbreaking ceremony on a cold November day to mark the start of construction of a proposed 20-bus storage and maintenance garage in Northampton's Industrial Park. The facility will serve the Authority's northern district, and will also house one of the nation's first public day care centers in a transit facility. Project completion is scheduled for the end of 1986. Shown from left to right are, Edward Skroski, Chairman, Northampton Redevelopment Authority; John Herlihy, President, Western Mass. Bus Lines, Inc.; James Lindstrom, Chairman, PVTA Advisory Board; Robert D. Manz, Administrator, PVTA; and Northampton Mayor David B. Musante Jr.

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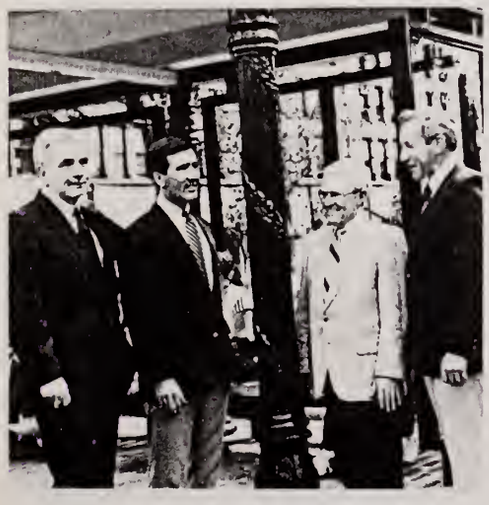
Depository Copy

New Bus Shelter in Court Square

Construction was completed and a dedication held for PVTA's new bus shelter in Court Square, Springfield in time for the city's big birthday celebration.

The copper domed shelter was designed in accordance with the guidelines established for Court Square, designated a National Historic Site. The design plans were approved by representatives of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Springfield Historical Commission, the National Advisory Council and other historic preservation agencies prior to the start of construction. The shelter is architecturally compatible with the gazebo and fountain in the Heritage Park.

The attractively designed shelter is convenient and comfortable for waiting bus passengers as well as a beautiful addition to Springfield's lovely Court Square.



Taking a moment to look over and admire the new PVTA bus shelter in Court Square, Springfield are (from left to right) Bob Tessier, Tessier Assoc., architects for the shelter, Richard Neal, Mayor of Springfield, Paul Daley, General Contractor, and Robert Manz.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz (left) and Springfield Transit Management Superintendent of Transportation James Wilcox step off the PVTA's "Commemorative Coach" in front of Springfield City Hall to attend the May meeting of the PVTA's Advisory Board.

Happy Birthday Springfield! From PVTA

Springfield Mayor Richard Neal, PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz and Richard Doyle, Region I Administrator of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration recently unveiled PVTA's "Commemorative Coach" in honor of Springfield's 350th Anniversary.

The transit bus, one of thirteen, 1980 Grumman Flxible buses recently purchased from the New York City Transit Authority, is attractively decorated with the logo designed for Springfield's 350th Anniversary.

"As a part of the Springfield community it is our pleasure to participate in the city's anniversary celebration," said Manz. He continued, "We at PVTA wish the city of Springfield "Happy Anniversary" and look forward to many years of continued service to the community."

The "Commemorative Coach" is operating on PVTA's regular line service and will remain decorated in honor of the city's celebration until the end of the year. The remaining Flxibles will be in service by December, 1986 after refurbishing.

The specially decorated coach was a part of Springfield's 350th Anniversary Parade held in May and has also been used to provide service to the city on special occasions. Mayor Neal expressed his thanks to PVTA for the use of the "Commemorative Coach" for a recent "Clean and Green Tour" of the city. Neal said, "I want to thank you for allowing us to use the beautiful, new 350th Anniversary bus.... We certainly looked impressive touring the city in such a fine coach."

Best wishes, Springfield, for the next 350!

Accepting their awards for the 1986 Bus Roadeo at the PVTA Advisory Board meeting on May 18 are (From left to right) Truman Easton of Springfield Transit Management, Greg Soho of UMass Transit, Neal Gifford of UMass Transit, Ramon Castro of Holyoke Street Railway and Ken Schwartz of UMass Transit.

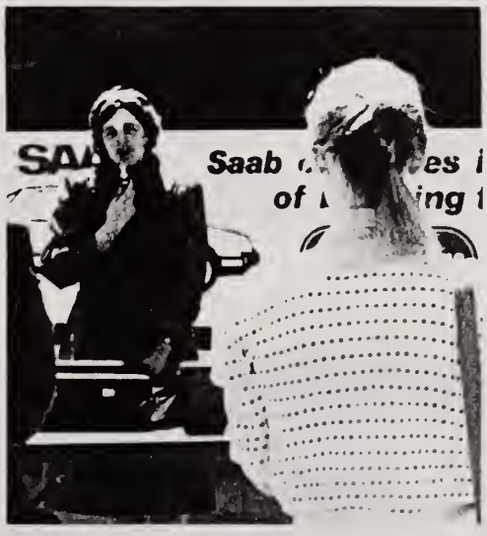
Groundbreaking For Northampton Transit Facility

Congressman Silvio Conte, as well as state, local and PVTA officials were in Northampton on May 9 for an official groundbreaking for the PVTA's Northampton Transit Facility located in the Northampton Industrial Park.

Space in the facility, which is scheduled for completion by the end of 1986, will be leased to Western Mass Bus Lines, which operates service for the PVTA in its northern district. The building will also house a public day care facility, serving 18-20 children, the first of its kind in the transit industry.

Speaking at the groundbreaking Congressman Conte said, "The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is nationally recognized as one of the most outstanding non-rail transit properties in the country, and I am pleased to participate in the project that will help enable it to become even better." Conte continued by praising the use of space in the transit facility for a public day care center. "I am especially pleased by the use of space within the transit complex. The public day care facility will be a valuable asset to this area."

Also attending the ceremonies were Ann Hershfang, Undersecretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, Denise Duffy of the Regional Office of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, Northampton Mayor David Musante and other local dignitaries. Jim Lindstrom, Chairman of the PVTA Advisory Board served as Master of Ceremonies.



Ann Hershfang, Undersecretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction

1986 Roadeo A Success

The fifth annual Pioneer Valley Transit Authority "Bus Roadeo" was held on Sunday, April 27, under threatening skies, at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

Over sixty contestants competed in this year's event testing the drivers on their skills behind the wheel, their knowledge of safety regulations and bus equipment used.

The winner of the competition, Truman Easton of Springfield Transit Management, will go on to compete in the international bus roadeo to be held later this year in Detroit. Mr. Easton has placed first in three of the five PVTA bus roadeos. He placed 4th nationally in the 1984 International Bus Roadeo in Washington, D.C.

PVTA Cooperates With DEM

At a ceremony held at the Springfield Transit Management Transit Facility in late May, James Gutensohn, Commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Management, placed the first of 400 public service bus posters advertising the Massachusetts state forest and park system on a PVTA bus.

The placards, entitled "Find Yourself in a State Park," will remain on the buses through Labor Day.

"Although almost every transit authority in the state is cooperating with us in this campaign, the PVTA is placing more placards than any of the other authorities, due to their large fleet," said Commissioner Gutensohn. "We hope people who have not visited a state park lately take advantage of this excellent public transportation system and ride the PVTA to the state parks in the area."

"We are pleased to have this opportunity to assist DEM in promoting the state park system, particularly those parks in the PVTA area," said Robert Manz, PVTA Administrator.

Governor Michael Dukakis expressed his thanks to PVTA Administrator Robert Manz and stated, "Please let your staff members and board know how much I appreciate the participation of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority with the Department of Environmental Management in this initiative."

Peter Pan Bus Lines Has "Service" As Its Byword

Peter Pan Bus Lines, Inc. of Springfield, MA began operating in 1933, and from the very beginning, the company's emphasis has been on quality service. The late Peter Carmine Picknelly, founder of Peter Pan, set the pace for innovations in transportation service throughout Massachusetts; a philosophy which spans over 50 years.

Peter Pan currently is the only form of public transportation between the most northern and southern points of the PVTA run, operating everyday of the year, 24 hours a day. Additionally, Peter Pan has been the primary link between Springfield, Holyoke, Northampton and Amherst. With hourly express service to Boston, and their new, New York City express service, Peter Pan now links Western Massachusetts with the rest of New England, making the company one of the largest independent bus carriers in the nation. Peter Pan has ordered 18 new state-of-the-art motorcoaches, which, upon their delivery date in August, will bring Peter Pan's fleet total to 104.

Because of the popularity of their summer beach service, Peter Pan has increased their bus line service to points on Cape Cod, MA, Misquamicut, RI and Hampton Beach, NH, from Springfield. Connecting service is also available from major cities in Connecticut, as well as Holyoke, Northampton, Amherst, Worcester, Newton and Boston, MA.

Peter Pan's dedication to quality service, transportation innovations and the excellence of the travel industry will continue under the leadership of Peter L. Picknelly, Sr., Chairman of the Board, and the third generation president of the company, Peter A. Picknelly, Jr.

"From the Administrator's Desk"

The spring and summer seasons have been busy for the PVTA. We hope that they have been good ones for you. As we look to the fall, we see the start of some new programs, and also take a moment to reflect on some past accomplishments.

The FY '87 budget, passed by the Board in June, shows no increase in the local funding share for the fourth consecutive year, despite anticipated federal cutbacks. Additionally, there will be no increase in fares for the sixth consecutive year. This has been accomplished through increased efficiency within the agency as well as an increase in state funding for transit.

Since the first of the year, we have taken delivery of thirteen 1980 Flxible buses, purchased from the New York City Transit Authority, that are being refurbished in-house. A photograph of the first of these buses, "the Commemorative Coach," appears on the first page of this issue. We expect delivery of ten new Neoplan Advanced Design buses, currently being built in Colorado, in the fall of 1986. Our ten 1965 GMC buses have been rebuilt by Body Rite of New Jersey, and are currently in service. We expect some very good years of service from the newly rebuilt buses.

We expanded our Holyoke Community College student bus pass program in the spring, enabling students to travel on the entire PVTA transit system using their student I.D. We will further expand that service in the fall with the extension of the Northampton, Easthampton route for the convenience of the Holyoke Community College students in the northern PVTA service area.

We provided special shuttle service for the ACC Craftfair, held in West Springfield in June for the 3rd year and instituted a shuttle service, in cooperation with the Springfield Parking Authority for the Watchtower Convention, held in Springfield in July.

The Hadley Council on Aging is the newest member of our Elderly and Handicapped Program, and will take delivery of a new van in the fall. Further expansion of the E & H Program will include new lift equipped vans for the Amherst Council on Aging and the Springfield Golden Age Club for their Under 60 Program.

The end of 1986 should see the completion of construction at the Northampton Transit Facility as well as the completion of the renovations at the Springfield Transit Management facility.

We look forward to cooler weather and continued top quality transit service for the residents of the PVTA service area.

Robert D Manz

STM News Brief

Celebrating 174,786 miles of accident free driving and 5,692 work hours without a loss time incident during April, STM Gen. Mgr. Peter Hefler serves coffee to Tony Gonzalez, "Bob" Santanello, President of A.T.U. Local #448 and John Librero.

From the Safety Corner

The People Who Keep Them Rolling

When you see the big blue and white buses rolling along the streets, you check a schedule, find the bus to be on time, and say to yourself, "That bus driver is doing a good job."

I agree, the PVTA is fortunate in having so many good, safe, responsible bus operators who are concerned with the safety and well being of the passengers.

Did you ever think about how the bus operator manages to get the bus to you, and safely transport you to the desired location. There is someone behind the scenes who often goes unnoticed, the **Mechanic.** The maintenance people make it possible for the transit fleet to keep rolling.

The average passenger probably never thinks of the mechanic as having a part in transporting people to work, school, sport activities and returning them home safely.

The PVTA mechanic is a dedicated person who understands the responsibility of the profession. The mechanic knows that his professionalism is riding with each passenger.

The safest driver cannot offer a safe ride if the vehicle is not mechanically sound. The mechanics job is demanding and not easy, it requires skill and considerable job knowledge and ingenuity.

He may find himself under a bus removing or installing a heavy part with road dirt falling down on him on a road call aiding a disabled bus in inclement weather.

Regardless of the time, reason or conditions, the PVTA mechanics are the people who really **"keep them rolling."**

William J. McCullough
Safety Supervisor

If you have items of interest that you would like to have included in the next issue of **In Transit** please send them along to Ann Dunphy, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, PVTA, 1365 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Marcia Burick of Northampton, outgoing representative to the PVTA Advisory Board, received the 1986 Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Recognition Award. With Marcia at the Planning Commission's Annual Meeting are (from left to right) Robert Manz, Timothy Brennan, Executive Director of the PVPC, Ms. Burick and David Musante, Mayor of Northampton.

Briefly...

Charlie Bein and his wife Denise enjoy a relaxing moment at the Storrowton Carriage House. They were joined by their daughter Patricia Weeks and her husband Brian and their daughter Carolyn Embury and her husband Ray at the retirement celebration.

- Congratulations to **Jim Lindstrom,** PVTA Advisory Board Delegate from Amherst, on his re-election as Chairman of the PVTA Advisory Board and to **Dennis Miles** of West Springfield on his election as Vice-Chairman.
- Passengers purchasing PVTA economy card passes will notice a new look. The newly designed bus passes depict a seasonal theme with a timely design for each month of the year.
- **Marcia Burick,** for the last six years the Northampton representative to the PVTA Advisory Board, has resigned her position as Administrative Assistant to Mayor David Musante and will assume the role of Director of Development at the Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton effective September 1.
- **Ann L. Dunphy** of Northampton was recently appointed Director of Marketing and Public Relations for the PVTA. She replaces Stephen Gazillo who resigned in December to become Manager of Special Operations at New Jersey Transit Rail Operations, Inc.
- PVTA received a merit award from the Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts at its 34th annual awards ceremony held in Springfield in April. The bronze excellence award was presented to the PVTA for advertising excellence in the category of outdoor-painted bulletins for a billboard advertisement entitled "Go Express."
- We read with interest the article in the June 25th edition of "The Morning Union" about **Marshall Hanson,** currently the safety director for Longueil Transportation Inc. Marshall has been involved in the transit industry for nearly 50 years and is an expert historian of transit information in this area.

MASS. Y3. PVTA1: 5/13

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

InTransit

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

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Edited by Ann L. Dunphy

Issue No. 13
April 1987

Springfield Transit Facility Renovation Completed

Dedication Ceremony Held March 15th

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority held a dedication ceremony on Sunday, March 15th, to celebrate the completion of renovations at its Springfield Transit Facility.

The renovation project completes the final phase of improvements to the facility located at 2840 Main Street in Springfield.

Speaking at the afternoon ceremony, Peter Klejna, PVTA Advisory Board Chairman, read from a letter received from Governor Michael Dukakis who was unable to attend the ceremony. Dukakis wrote, "It gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to you as you celebrate the completion of Phase II of the renovations of the Springfield Transit Facility. I'm confident that the improvements . . . will not only make it more pleasant for the personnel, they will also make it easier to maintain and even enhance the superlative service you already provide for Springfield's commuting public." PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz, said that, "This renovated facility will carry Springfield's transit operation well into the 21st century providing efficient, up-to-date service to the residents of the Springfield area."

The completed renovation project, the third phase of a total renovation to the facility, included renovation of the maintenance area, remodeling of the office area, completion of outdoor yard paving, lighting and fencing and installation of new doors and windows. Six new bus lifts have replaced older style pits which dated back to the era of streetcars. The first phase of the project, which consisted of refinishing the 57,000 square foot storage garage, construction of a new service building and creation of a new body shop area, was completed in the Spring of 1985.

Tours of the renovated facility were conducted throughout the afternoon led by staff of Springfield Transit Management.

PVTA contracts with Springfield Transit Management to operate transit service in the greater Springfield area. Several hundred made their way through the facility during the afternoon open house.

At the dedication . . . (from left to right) Robert Manz, PVTA Administrator, Colleen LaSorsa—Administrative Aide to Mayor Neal, Dick Doyle—Administrator, Region I, UMTA, Peter Picknelly, Sr.—President, S.T.M., Bill McGrath—Alternate Designee, PVTA Advisory Board, Spfld., Bill Foley—President, Springfield City Council, Bob Markel—Springfield City Council, Atty. Michael Powers—Administrative Assistant, Congressman Boland, Peter Klejna—Chairman, PVTA Advisory Board.

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From the Safety Corner

Behind the Scenes

Most people in the public sector think of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority as a system that really takes care of itself.

A driver reports for work, takes a bus and starts picking up people and safely moves them around the city to desired locations. We never take the time to really understand why and how these buses are kept on the street.

The Drivers and Mechanics are very important and necessary to the PVTA as the system could not function without them.

Did you ever think of how the system is coordinated and held together?

Lets take a look behind the scenes, into the office buildings, behind the walls where some people stay from 8:00 AM-4:30 PM on a daily basis.

I will refer to these people, the General Managers, Superintendents, Secretaries and Clerks as coordinators who are responsible for holding the entire system together into one efficient working unit.

All information concerning the daily operation is channeled into the office system where it is processed, assembled, analyzed and then used to make the decisions which keeps the system operational and buses on the street.

The next time you board a bus, remember the outstanding teams who remain behind the scenes of the PVTA system.

William J. McCullough
Safety Coordinator, PVTA

If you have items of interest that you would like to have included in the next issue of **In Transit** please send them along to Ann Dunphy, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, PVTA, 1365 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

UMass Transit Receives New Buses

Pictured here following the ribbon cutting ceremony are Jim Lindstrom, then Chairman of the PVTA Advisory Board, Bill Barrett, Director of Transportation, UMass Transit and Congressman Conte.

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) recently had a dedication of 10 new buses to be used by UMass Transit Services for its university and town bus program. The university bus program, in operation since 1973, is one of the first of its kind in the nation. The fare-free program serves over 30,000 students attending Smith College, Hampshire College, Amherst College, Mount Holyoke College and the University of Massachusetts, all located within the PVTA service area.

The 40 foot Neoplan Advanced Design vehicles were manufactured in Lamar, Colorado. The new buses are part of PVTA's plan to keep equipment up-to-date through a combined program of refurbishing, rebuilding and purchasing new equipment to insure that the riders in the 23 community system have the safest and best equipment at the lowest possible cost.

Congressman Silvio Conte (R-MA) attended the afternoon ceremony, held on the UMass campus. In his remarks Conte stated, "Last year the University of Massachusetts service carried over 3 million passengers . . . this was one of the first systems in the country to use pre-paid, non-fare financing, and was initiated at my request as an UMTA demonstration project. Clearly this type of ridership testifies to the success of this experiment." Also speaking at the ceremony were Paul Bauer, Regional Counsel for UMTA Region 1, and John DeNyse, Vice-Chancellor for Administration and Finance, UMASS, Amherst.

To celebrate the arrival of the new buses, blue and white balloons were released from one of the buses at the time of the ribbon cutting.

Klejna Elected Board Chair . . .

Peter B. Klejna of Williamsburg was recently elected chairman of the PVTA Advisory Board.

Mr. Klejna is currently a private consultant specializing in urban planning and landscape design services. He is also a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, studying geology and geography. He is the chairman of the Joint Transportation Committee of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

Klejna has served as Hadley's Town Planner, Principal Landscape Architect for the city of Worcester, Senior Planner for the city of Northampton and Planner for the Town of Wilbraham.

He is a graduate of Williams College. Klejna, a native of Springfield, currently lives in Williamsburg with his wife and two children.

Mr. Klejna replaces James Lindstrom of Amherst who recently moved from the area to become Executive Secretary to the Board of Selectmen in Chatham on Cape Cod.

Pictured here is the new van for Hadley's Special Transportation Program. Local residents and elected officials had an opportunity to inspect the vehicle at a February 26th dedication ceremony. Also attending the afternoon program were Peter Klejna, PVTA Advisory Board Chairman, Hadley designee on the PVTA Board Robert Kozash, PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz and Alice Misa, Director of the Hadley Council on Aging.

New Vans for PVTA Special Transportation Programs

During the months of February and March PVTA has taken delivery of twelve new vans for the special transportation program which provides transportation to the area's disabled and elderly population.

The vans, all 1986 lift-equipped Dodge vehicles, are leased to area communities. The special transportation programs are operated by area Councils on Aging and other Human Service agencies.

New vans have been received by the towns of Agawam, Amherst, East Longmeadow, Hadley, the cities of Springfield and Westfield as well as the UMass Office of Handicapped Student Affairs.

The towns of Belchertown and Granby have each received a station wagon in a new program designed to provide more efficient special transportation in communities that cover a wide geographic area.

Westfield Mayor George Varelas gets some assistance from Gladys Lakavich, Director of the Westfield Council on Aging, as they cut the ribbon on the new van for Westfield's Special Transportation program. Looking on are PVTA Administrator Robert Manz and Janice Pugliano, PVTA Advisory Board designee from Westfield.

PVTA Goes to School...

PVTA Initiates School Education Program

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, in cooperation with the Chicopee Public School System, initiated a school transit education program (STEP) in the fall. The pilot program, geared to sixth graders, educated the children in areas of "How To Ride The Bus," bus safety and rules of courtesy. Robert D. Manz, PVTA Administrator, stated that, "The purpose of the STEP program is to educate the riders of the future as to the advantages of using public transportation."

Sixth grade students from the City of Chicopee return to their bus for the trip back to school, "none the worse for wear," after riding through the bus wash at PVTA's Springfield Transit Facility.

PVTA's pilot program was comprised of a series of educational field trips for each of Chicopee's nine elementary schools. The children were picked up at their schools by a PVTA bus. The driver explained the destination signs and proper boarding procedures. The children learned about fares, a bit of the history of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, how to indicate when they are ready to leave the bus, the importance of public transportation and practical items and "rules of the road" such as not to take radios on the bus, no eating or drinking on the bus and the importance of keeping packages and other objects out of the aisles.

The students were taken to PVTA's Springfield Transit Facility in Springfield (MA) where they had an opportunity to watch the maintenance, operations and administrative departments at work. The "Grand Finale" of the tour was a ride through the bus wash, the most popular part of the trip! Each student was presented with a diploma and a PVTA information packet at the end of the trip.

Students were given an opportunity to ask questions throughout the trip. The questions ranged from, "How much does a bus driver make?", "What time does the bus for the mall leave after school?" "How many buses do you have?", to "How much does a bus weigh?" Their enthusiasm is evident. Many of them presently use the services of PVTA for non-school trips.

The success of the program can best be "summed up" in the words of the program's participants, the Chicopee sixth graders. The following quotes are taken from thank you letters sent to Ann Dunphy, PVTA's Director of Marketing and Public Relations, the program's coordinator.

> "I really liked the trip, and learned many things I never knew before . . . I will always remember the bus as good transportation."

> "I especially liked the bus wash and the bus ride down there and back. I also loved the way you can put a big heavy bus up on a lift . . . I guess you'd say that I liked everything best! Well, I want to thank you again, for everything!"

(continued on page 5)

Students from "The Kids Place" in Agawam leave a PVTA bus with smiling faces after taking a ride through the area surrounding the school, for some their first bus ride. Looking on is Peter Hefler, then General Manager of Springfield Transit Management.

... School Program

"I think it's really neat how you sort all that money out."

"I learned a lot about the PVTA system. I learned how to pay the fare, the rules and regulations, and where they fix and wash the buses."

Carolyn Fitzgerald, Assistant to the Superintendent, Chicopee School System, has been an enthusiastic supporter of the program. She said, "We are glad to have the contact with the community and appreciate PVTA's interest in the schools. This is another example of school/community partnership."

It is hoped that this program will expand to other school systems in the years to come.

Expanded HCC Program a Success

For the second consecutive year, PVTA has provided direct transit service to Holyoke Community College on a pre-paid fare basis. The students are assessed a fee at the beginning of the semester which enables them to ride free on all routes throughout the PVTA service area. The program is similar to a PVTA sponsored program at Westfield State College which has been in existence since the mid 1970's. The Westfield service, however, is limited to the two PVTA routes that operate directly to the college, with all students being assessed a fee.

The Fall of 1986 saw an expansion of the HCC program with the addition of a new route from downtown Northampton to HCC on a one-year trial basis. The new route has been successful,carrying an average of 75 students daily. Two buses operate in the mornings and two in the afternoons.

The new Northampton-HCC route allows all riders to make connections to other destinations. Riders can connect to an express bus to Springfield as well as buses to Westfield and Chicopee.

PVTA information staff members have provided information to students on the new route as well as all other HCC service through an information booth set up at the college at the beginning of each semester.

"From the Administrator's Desk"

The days are longer and Spring is in the air. It has been a long, hard winter for all of us. The "blizzard" of January 22 was a day we'll all remember—roads clogged with snow and ice and plenty of traffic, yet PVTA had over 75 buses operating in the Springfield, Chicopee and Holyoke areas during the height of the storm. We have heard from many of our riders who were travelling by bus on that day and although the trip home for some was a long one, we have had many positive comments on the patience and skill of our drivers. We want to thank our riders for their patience as well as our drivers who were out there battling the elements.

Over the last several months we have seen the completion of PHASE II renovations at the Springfield Transit Facility, the delivery of ten new buses for UMASS Transit, new vans and two station wagons for use in PVTA's Special Transportation program, continued construction of the Northampton Transit Facility, the completion of a design contract for an expanded UMASS Transit Facility and the refurbishment of nine of the 13 Flxible buses purchased from the NYC Transit Authority.

We continue to deal with changes that must be made in the delivery of transit service in our 23 community area. New federal legislation is requiring that we take a close look at our Special Transportation program for the handicapped. At the same time, the Board and Staff are hard at work on the annual budget process, attempting to balance the needs and pocketbooks of the riders in the Pioneer Valley with the problems of increased federal regulations and declining federal dollars.

We look ahead to the completion of construction at the Northampton Transit Facility, the construction phase at the UMASS Transit Facility and the kick off of pass and token programs to attract more riders to PVTA.

Bob Manz
Administrator

The Route #111 Express bus awaits students at HCC for the express trip to Springfield on a cold winter's day in February.

Benedict Grabierz, Superintendent of Maintenance at STM (left) is pictured here with the maintenance staff alongside one of the Flxible buses purchased from the NYC Transit Authority and totally refurbished by the staff.

"We Wish You Well . . . Benny"

Benedict Grabierz, Superintendent of Maintenance at Springfield Transit Management, Inc. is retiring after forty-two years of service. Benny started working for the Springfield Street Railway in February of 1945 as a mechanic. He remembers when the Springfield Street Railway operation was spread around town in a number of buildings. It was not until the early 1950's that the entire operation was consolidated into one physical plant. Benny also recalled the problems with maintaining older buses prior to 1978 when Springfield Street Railway operated school buses in the city of Springfield as well as transit service. Benny was pleased when PVTA entered into an agreement with the then Springfield Street Railway in 1978 providing the company with sixty-six new buses, the first in a long time. When Route 91 was being constructed it became necessary to tear down the existing storage garage and relocate it on the same property. That winter the buses had to be stored outside and were kept running for 24 hours a day in order to keep them from freezing. Bennys says that he "has enjoyed working for the transit company. . . . When you find something you like to do you stay." We wish Benny well in his retirement years. He will be missed by everyone.

Congratulations Sharon and Dave!

Sharon Zukowski (left), special services operator for the Belchertown Council on Aging, and Dave McCulloch, Maintenance Superintendent at UMass Transit Service, are pictured here with the plaques they received for their selection as PVTA Employees of the Year. In presenting the awards PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said, "PVTA does not spend sufficient time in recognizing its employees. It is a pleasant task to recognize two individuals as employees of the year."

Ms. Zukowski was cited as "a van driver who has exhibited an exemplary attitude and concern for the elders, has an exceptional driving and attendance record and whose excellent supervision of all vehicle maintenance has resulted in decreased 'down time' for the vehicles."

McCulloch was described as "a tireless worker who is always attempting to learn the latest industry techniques to improve efficiency and reduce expenses. His dedication to the transit industry and to PVTA is without match."

Briefly . . .

- New faces at 1365 Main Street—**Barbara Pohl** of Springfield has taken the position of Executive Secretary to PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz and **Patty Robitaille** of Northampton is the new PVTA Assistant Financial Officer. Patty took the place of **Kevin J. Lebo** who is currently the Controller at Springfield Transit Management, Inc.
- PVTA Administrator **Robert D. Manz** was elected Regional Director of Region I of the American Public Transit Association at its annual meeting in Detroit.
- **Paul Lemieux** has taken over as General Manager of Springfield Transit Management, Inc. Paul replaces **Peter Hefler** who left STM to become General Manager of Travel Time Bus Lines.
- A Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) has been installed at the PVTA Information Office. The TDD enables members of the hearing-impaired community to communicate with the information office. The conversation is taped rather than spoken. The installation of the TDD makes the Information Office more accessible to hearing-impaired residents in the 23 communities served by PVTA.
- PVTA has received a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction to consolidate and coordinate transportation services for the Elderly and Handicapped. **Jo-Anne Walsh** has been hired as Special Services Coordinator to oversee the program development.
- **Upcoming Events**—It's Roadeo time again. The PVTA Roadeo is scheduled for May 3, the UMass Transit Roadeo for May 9 and the first annual PVTA Van Roadeo for the 17th of May.

MASS. YB. PVTA 1: 3/14

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

In Transit

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

Edited by
Tracey L. Thompson

JUN 9 1988

Issue No. 14
February, 1988

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Special Transportation Services Directory Published

An important tool for elderly and handicapped transit users

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority has published a new directory, listing all special transportation services available to senior citizens and the disabled in the 23 cities and towns served by PVTA.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said, "This is important because it's the first step in a program to truly serve the transportation needs of people who cannot avail themselves of bus transit." PVTA Executive Assistant Marlene Connor adds, "One of the biggest problems with the van services is that not enough people know they're there. This will be a way to do that." She calls the directory "a great service to the community."

The eight-page booklet was put together under the Transportation Coordination Improvement program. PVTA received a 58-thousand dollar grant for that program, from the state Executive Office of Transportation and Construction. PVTA Special Services Coordinator Jo-Anne Walsh says, "The grant was provided to develop coordinated transportation services between regional transit authority programs and human service agency programs." Walsh says she'll continue working with the operators, "to better-meet the growing demand for special services."

Special transportation services directory unveiled in ceremonies at PVTA headquarters. Left to right: PVTA Executive Assistant Marlene B. Connor; Alice Levinson, Director of the Mayor's Office for Handicapped Affairs in Springfield; PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz; PVTA Special Services Coordinator Jo-Anne Walsh; Teresa Passineau, President of Longmeadow Transportation Inc.

The directory answers many questions for seniors and the handicapped, such as: What services are available in my community? Do they have vans or cars? What about wheelchair lifts? How much does it cost, and how do I arrange for a ride? What about eligibility requirements and identification cards?

Manz expects the booklet to be very well-received. "It shows the

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PVTA Committee Explores Re-Use For Springfield's Union Station

A special PVTA subcommittee that was set up to study possible redevelopment of the Union Station property in downtown Springfield has begun meeting. The panel heard on January 6th from representatives of Sverdrup Corporation, the national engineering firm hired to conduct a feasibility study of the property. PVTA has received a 25-thousand dollar federal grant for the study.

The subcommittee is chaired by PVTA Advisory Board chairman Peter B. Klejna, with six other members representing the city of Springfield, redevelopment and planning agencies and PVTA. The members include: PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz, PVTA Executive Assistant Marlene B. Connor, Chief Transportation Planner Roger Henze of the Pioneer Valley

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Hefler Back At The Wheel For S.T.M.

The new man in the general manager's office at Springfield Transit Management, Inc. has a familiar face to many—Peter R. Hefler has returned after nearly two years as G.M. at Travel Time Bus Lines. Hefler had been general manager at STM before that, from October 1985 to November of the following year. He replaces Paul Lemieux, who left to take a job with Peter Pan Bus Lines in Worcester.

"I'm delighted to be back in the public transit arena," Hefler says. "I'm a strong proponent of public transit." Hefler also feels it's very important to set an example, so he rides the bus to and from work every day. "If you're in the industry," he says emphatically, "you *ride* the industry."

In some ways Hefler is picking up right where he left off in 1986. He had implemented a safety program which he says reduced accidents throughout the STM fleet, "thanks to a positive employee/management strategy." He had a running bet with the drivers, so that if they put together an accident-free month (no accidents that could be attributed to the bus driver), he said "thank you" by coming in to STM at 4:30 a.m. to serve them coffee and donuts. Shortly after returning to STM Hefler found himself suffering from a serious case of deja-vu. December, 1987 was an accident-free month . . . and February 9th found him at the garage area bright and early, coffee pot in hand.

Hefler's number-one goal right now is to increase the PVTA's ridership, and he has some pretty definite ideas on how to go about it. "We've never been successful at targeting the downtown worker," he says. That's where he wants to concentrate his efforts. He realizes that as long as there's *any* parking available downtown, many people will choose to drive their own cars. But he says, "Transit shouldn't become the alternative only when the parking situation becomes impossible."

Hefler's experience prior to STM included a number of government-sector jobs that combined his community relations skills with his knowledge and expertise in the area of transportation. He served in the office of the Secretary of Defense at the Pentagon, as an Air Force staff officer at the Pentagon, and under the Secretary of the Air Force in New York, New York. Hefler has a B.A. degree from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, an M.B.A. from Adelphi University, and Ph.D. work in Transportation from American University.

Congratulations from the top! Left to right: Vin Gonzalez, Business Agent for Amalgamated Transit Union Local 448 congratulates James Wilcox, Director of Operations at Springfield Transit Management, as Gabe Santaniello (2nd from left), President of Local 448, congratulates Peter Hefler, General Manager at STM for an accident-free December.

PVTA Hires New Marketing Director

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority has hired a former local broadcaster as Director of Marketing and Public Relations. Tracey L. Thompson replaced Ann L. Dunphy, who resigned last October to take a public relations position at Cooley-Dickinson hospital in Northampton.

Thompson is returning to Springfield after a stint as Executive News Producer at WBZ radio in Boston. Prior to that she was well-known in Western Massachusetts as a newscaster for seven years at WHYN AM & FM. She started her new duties with PVTA on December 7th.

Thompson is a 1977 graduate of the University of Maine, with two B.A. degrees in Journalism and Broadcasting. She lives with her husband and son in South Hadley.

From The Administrator's Desk . . .

It has been a long time since the last "In Transit," more than nine months. Many things have been accomplished, and we look forward to fulfilling our plans for 1988. Both are listed below:

Accomplishments

- The FY '88 PVTA budget was approved;
- Four 3302A GMC 1973 busses were purchased from Long Beach, N.Y.:
- STM took over the management of the former Holyoke Street Railway Company contract;
- PVTA persuaded several major Springfield employers to join a company-supported bus pass program;
- The UMass expansion construction project got underway in August, 1987;
- New service to Holyoke Community College was implemented;
- The FY '89 contractor budgets were submitted to PVTA;
- Five 3302A GMC 1973 busses were purchased from Pinellas Sun Coast Transit Authority in Clearwater, Florida;
- PVTA received approval to retrofit ninety RTS busses;
- PVTA survived a 14% cut in federal operations assistance, which resulted in a loss of approximately $500,000.00.

Plans For The Future

- PVTA vows to hold the line on bus fares again in FY '89;
- Redesign and renovation work on the North Main street firehouse is to be completed by 1990;
- A strong effort will be made to change attitudes of core area employees toward public transit;

Robert D. Manz, Administrator

- System speed will be improved by means of better traffic regulations;
- More passenger waiting shelters will be added;

Continued on Page 7

PVTA Acquires Historic Firehouse

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority has purchased an historic firehouse from the city of Springfield for $110,000. The interior of the two-story brick building will be redesigned and renovated, while the exterior appearance will be maintained. The Authority's van operations will then be moved into the first floor, and the second floor will become office space.

The firehouse is located in the city's north end, right next to the PVTA transit facility. That proximity is one reason PVTA Administrotor Robert D. Manz is pleased with the acquisition. He says, "This will mean consolidation of the Springfield metropolitan-area special services, and provide a first-class headquarters building for the Authority."

The building was constructed at the turn of the century. Its special features include beautiful arched windows and a five-story brick tower, once used for hanging hoses out to dry after a fire! PVTA Executive Assistant Marlene Connor says the firehouse is on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Authority will work with the Massachusetts Historical Commission on the renovation project.

The PVTA Advisory Board has authorized the staff to advertise, both locally and nationally, for redesign proposals. Connor says the expected timetable is for design work to be done this year, renovation work next year and occupancy of the building in 1990.

The former North Main Street firehouse in Springfield will house van operations and new PVTA headquarters by 1990.

In The Fast Lane

There's been another switch at the helm of Springfield Transit Management, Inc. Last year Paul Lemieux replaced Peter Hefler as general manager, when Hefler left to become G.M. at Travel Time bus lines. This time Hefler is replacing Lemieux, who's taken a position with Peter Pan bus lines in Worcester. Good luck to Paul and welcome back to Peter!

* * * * *

You'll see some new faces at PVTA headquarters at 1365 Main Street. Accountant Carolyn Hart has joined the financial staff, and Tracey L. Thompson has been hired as the new Director of Marketing and Public Relations. Carol Chenevert and Kathleen Monroe have also been added as full-time members of the information staff, and Karen Hanson has been hired as clerk-typist.

* * * * *

Two long-time employees of Springfield Transit Management retired recently. Frank Motley, a foreman in maintenance, retired after twenty years with the company. William McDonald, a supervisor in transit, worked for STM 23 years before retiring at the end of 1987. Best wishes for a long and happy retirement to Frank and Bill.

STM Supervisor Dennis d.j. Gonzalez uses body language to make a point, while answering questions at New Citizen night at Springfield's New North School.

* * * * *

Several new members have joined the PVTA Advisory Board since the last *In Transit* was published. Cynthia Watson of Granby was appointed in May, 1987 and Richard Green of Hampden was named to the board in June. Three new members were appointed in September: Arthur Noonan of Holyoke, Kirk Whatley of Sunderland and James Boardman of Westfield. David Pond of East Longmeadow became a board member in October, and Ann Dunphy of Northampton was appointed in January, 1988. Welcome, new Advisory Board members!

* * * * *

Preparations are underway for a couple of major events later this year. The annual Safety Awards brunch will be held Sunday, March 13th at the Holiday Inn at Ingleside in Holyoke. Springfield Mayor Richard E. Neal will be guest speaker, as PVTA honors drivers and mechanics with long safety records. The bus and van Roadeos will be

Pleased to meet you! STM Supervisor Bob Reed (far right) shakes hands with a student who expressed interest in a career in public transit, at Van Sickle Junior High's Career Day. Looking on is STM General Manager Peter Hefler.

held at UMass/Amherst on Sunday, May 1st and Sunday, May 15th respectively. Safety Coordinator Bill McCullough is heading up the roadeo planning committee. And May 18th is National Bus Driver appreciation Day. PVTA will hold special ceremonies marking the day, and tentative plans call for a new marketing campaign to be kicked off around the same time.

* * * * *

PVTA staffers attended an orientation session in January for hispanics who are new residents of Springfield. The evening was sponsored by the Puerto Rican Cultural Center and was well-attended by about eighty people. Marketing Director Tracey Thompson and STM Supervisor Domingo d.j. Gonzalez encouraged the new residents to try riding the bus, and handed out schedules, maps and pamphlets.

* * * * *

PVTA set up information booths at the start of the new semester at Holyoke Community College and Springfield Technical Community College. Information staffer Simone Couture did a great job at both schools.

* * * * *

Career day at Van Sickle Junior High in Springfield was also successful. STM General Manager Peter Hefler and Supervisor Bob Reed answered questions for a couple of hundred teenagers who stopped at the PVTA display.

* * * * *

The two bus stops at the Fairfield Mall in Chicopee have been consolidated into one stop, at the center rear of the mall where a food court has been built and a new back door added. There is also a new wall display in the food court, featuring PVTA bus routes and schedules.

* * * * *

More than 400 residents of Colonial Estates, an apartment complex on Beacon Circle in Springfield, now have improved public transportation to downtown and the Eastfield Mall. PVTA Executive Assistant Marlene Connor says a survey showed residents wanted more midday service. So PVTA has added a trip from the complex to the mall at 12:35 p.m., and a trip that leaves downtown at 2:30 p.m., then goes to the mall and Colonial Estates.

"Information, please!" PVTA Information staffer Simone Couture talks with two students at Springfield Technical Community College. Info booths were set up at both STCC and Holyoke Community College.

PVTA Combines Routes To Upgrade Service

by Marlene B. Connor

The PVTA has recently combined two routes, serving the city of Northampton, the town of Easthampton and Holyoke Community College. The realignment will improve service to the college and provide more efficient service along the entire route, while having a minimal impact on residents of both communities.

Some elderly residents of the New City section of Easthampton were concerned that not every trip into town would go through their neighborhood. In response, the Easthampton Council on Aging, which provides door-to-door van service, has agreed to increase the service by an extra half-hour in the mornings. This will ensure that all residents will have adequate levels of transportation. This is also an example of the increasing coordination of transportation service, to better serve communities. By working together, everyone gets improved service.

The new route will provide two additional trips per day to Holyoke Community College. This will greatly enhance the ability of students to commute to school on the bus.

This one's ready! One of the nine 1973 3302A GMC busses that are currently being re-habbed by STM mechanics.

Union Station . . .

Continued from Page 1

Planning Commission, Springfield Planning Director Dave Moriarty, Springfield Community Development Director Domenic Sarno and Executive Director Carlo Marchetti of Springfield Central, Inc.

Klejna says the committee's purpose is "to ascertain whether the Union Station property has potential for future re-use as a multimodal transportation facility." But he says other uses for the land, both public and private, might also be found.

Union Station is located on two-point-four acres of land on Lyman Street in Springfield. It's owned by David Buntzman of Scarsdale, New York and is little-used any more except as a passenger waiting area for Amtrak trains that stop at the station a few times a day. The property is part of Springfield's urban renewal plan, and Buntzman has a year to make what the city calls "a good-faith effort" to do something more with it. After that the city could take the land by eminent domain.

Planning Director Moriarty says the station acts as a barrier between downtown and the north end. He says, "Years ago, that was the hub of all activity . . . but over the years it's become almost a blighting influence." Still, Moriarty has high hopes for the property's future. He and other city officials have travelled the country touring former railroad stations, and he says, "It's amazing what they've done with them!" He says he's wide open to any re-use possibilities, and hopes the other panel members are, too.

Moriarty's sentiments are echoed by Marlene Connor of the PVTA. "I think it has a lot of potential to be a landmark in downtown Springfield," she says. "The question the feasibility study will answer is whether it will be transportation or some other re-use."

Sverdrup has three months to conduct the study and report back to the committee. Moriarty cautions that this is only the first step in what could be a very lengthy process, but he's hoping the study will "incite the imaginations of a lot of developers."

1987 Highlights . . .

May Through November

May

PVTA held its sixth annual Bus Roadeo at UMass/Amherst. The winners were: first place, Bill Cranshaw of UMass Transit Service; second place, Greg Soho of UMass Transit; third place, Truman Easton of STM; fourth place, Ramon Castro of Holyoke Street Railway; fifth place, Ken Schwartz of UMass Transit.

PVTA's first Van Roadeo was held at UMass/Amherst. The winners were: first place, Sharon Zukowski of the Belchertown Council on Aging; second place, Steve Locke of UMass Transit; third place, John Trudeau of the Springfield Golden Age Club.

The winner of the first "Riders Choice" driver of the year contest was announced. It was Lenny Houle, nominated by Joan O'Connor of Chicopee for "his great sense of humor, his ability to relate to young and old, and his safe driving habits."

PVTA sponsored a meeting at Holyoke Community College to introduce and explain the Coordination Improvement program. Representatives of about 70 human service agencies and special transportation providers attended.

June

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz made a presentation to executives of BayBank Valley Trust about the convenience and economy of monthly bus passes.

Springfield Mayor Richard E. Neal held a news conference with PVTA officials to announce plans for "Ride to Work" week in July.

Refurbishing work was completed on thirty 1980 Grumman Flxibles, purchased for less than 15-thousand dollars apiece from the NYC transit authority.

July

Rehabilitation work was begun on 1978 GMC RTS busses. PVTA will rebuild a total of 125 of the RTS vehicles.

Ride to Work week was held in Springfield. Downtown employees were encouraged to sign up with their employer to receive a special PVTA pass, good for free bus rides that week.

September

The daycare center in the Northampton Transit Facility was opened. It's the first such center in a transit facility in the country.

October

The first statewide bus roadeo was held in Worcester. The event was organized by PVTA staffers, and Ramon Castro of STM placed second in the competition.

November

Sverdrup Corporation was chosen by the PVTA to conduct a feasibility study for redevelopment of Union Station in Springfield.

Lenny Houle Named "Riders' Choice Driver of the Year"

He's number one! STM driver Lenny Houle was awarded a plaque naming him the first "Riders' choice Driver of the Year" in 1987. With him is Joan O'Connor, the Chicopee woman who wrote the winning letter nominating Houle.

Directory . . . *Continued from Page 1*

state's commitment to providing transportation for this segment of the population," he says. "And with coordination of other elements of transportation programs, it shows the state has become more concerned about seeing efficient use of this money."

The special services directory was inserted in the January 17th edition of the Springfield Sunday Republican, so that all home subscribers to the Sunday paper received a copy. In addition, Walsh has sent copies to all of the area Councils on Aging and various human service agencies. "It's very important that everyone who wants or needs a copy of the directory gets one," she says. For that reason the PVTA also asked that anyone who got the directory and did not need it for themselves, pass it on to an elderly or disabled family member or friend.

Walsh says, "Special transportation services have always been available, but information about them has not been. The directory contains a listing of all PVTA special services, as well as 17 agency transportation services that are operated in the PVTA district." The booklet also received praise from Alice Levinson, Director of the Mayor's Office of Handicapped Affairs in Springfield. "I think it's very important for two reasons," she said. "In the short term it will provide information for disabled people, most of whom want to be independent, so they can access transportation services more easily. And in the long term, the information that was collected will lay the groundwork for an improved network that will be able to provide more rides for disabled people, in a more efficient and economical way."

Now that the directory is finished, Walsh says her next task will be to set up a brokerage system for special transportation services as a model program. The program's goals are to establish a central intake point for requests for service, and a central location for scheduling and dispatching. The broker would also handle billing and contracting procedures. Walsh says PVTA is currently trying to work out agreements with a number of state agencies that have transportation funds, to set up the pilot system.

Walsh also sees a greater effort in the future to coordinate joint purchasing of equipment and maintenance services. She says all the participating agencies could save money and avoid duplication of effort that way. She'd also like to see expanded special transportation services on evenings, nights and weekends. "It would open up a whole new world of social, cultural, educational and recreational activities for the elderly and handicapped," she says.

But Walsh feels the most important thing is to keep looking ahead. "For instance, with the brokerage program," she says, "we're going to build in as much growth potential as possible. That way, as more and more communities join in somewhere down the line, we can keep right on growing with the wave of the future."

Administrator . . . *Con't. from Page 3*

- Major improvements to core area passenger waiting areas will be made;
- There will be improved coordination of special services, the fastest-growing segment of our transportation.

Progress and change both take time. We have made great progress so far in this decade, if you look back to 1980 and list all the things we've accomplished. The future looks bright, and I see significant changes ahead in the next five years that will make transit much more vital to the community than it already is today. This progress cannot be achieved without the help and dedication of our transit supporters and all transit employees.

Bob Manz
PVTA Administrator

PVTA Works Hand-In-Hand With Growing Springfield Business

Monarch employees encouraged to try the bus

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is making life a little easier for four-hundred employees of the Monarch Corporation, who have been transferred to the new Monarch-West facility at Ingleside in Holyoke. PVTA is now providing special bus service from downtown Springfield to Monarch-West, located at the site of the former Wang plant on Whiting Farms Road.

Monarch employees were encouraged to give the bus a try, with the offer of free return-trip passes good for two weeks in December and one week in January. In addition, Monarch offers to pay half the cost of monthly bus passes for any employees who want them.

The Monarch-West service is an extension of PVTA route 111, currently serving Holyoke Community College. Two additional runs have been added in the morning, going from the civic center to Monarch-West to H.C.C.; and two evening runs from Monarch-West back downtown. The service has been implemented on a six-month trial basis, and PVTA Executive Assistant Marlene Connor is hoping to see high ridership. She says the service came about as the result of a request from Signature Development Corporation (developers of the Monarch-West project) last summer.

The PVTA Advisory Board okayed the plan at its December meeting, and PVTA staffers quickly set up meetings with Monarch employees to explain the benefits of using public transit. PVTA Marketing Director Tracey L. Thompson and Information Supervisor Mary Commisso held information sessions at Monarch-West in December, and at the Monarch facility at 146 Chestnut Street in Springfield in January. They outlined the trial service and handed out VIP passes, bus routes and schedules.

The PVTA is extremely pleased to be working closely with Monarch on a project that will benefit both the Authority and Monarch employees. A number of Springfield's largest firms, like Monarch, encourage their people to use public transit by offering subsidized monthly bus passes. They include Mass Mutual, BayBank and Springfield Institution for Savings.

Holiday Spirits Felt At PVTA!

The spirit of Christmas was certainly felt at the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority in 1987. The Authority ran its annual "Santa Claus drives the bus!" free-ride promotion, and it was quite successful. Two drivers played the role of Santa this year—Paul Rheaume of Westfield on the twelve Springfield runs and Michael Gilroy of South Hadley on the nine Holyoke runs. The event received excellent media coverage from newspapers, radio and television in the greater Springfield area, and helped boost ridership during the last week before Christmas.

Gilroy has worn a Sata costume while driving his bus several times in the past, and he's glad to do it. "I get as much enjoyment out of it as the people getting on the bus," he says. "Their eyes light up, their smiles get a mile long, and it's so satisfying to see them getting in the mood for Christmas!" Gilroy also jazzed up the performance by bringing along tapes of Mitch Miller Christmas music, and he says his passengers had a great time singing along.

Driver Paul Rheaume echoes Gilroy's enthusiasm for Santa duty. He didn't volunteer for it, but says, "I was kind of hoping they'd ask." He agrees that, of course, the kids love to see Santa Claus drive the bus, but he thinks senior citizens actually enjoy it the most. Rheaume says they get sentimental as they remember their own childhood holidays, and the reward he gets from it all is simply, "seeing their smiling eyes."

The PVTA also received a special Christmas card this year from a grateful rider. "Thank you for the (bus) shelter you put in front of Food Mart on Belmont Avenue," Mrs. A. Bryant writes. "I'm sure you made many, many people happy. That's like a Christmas present to me!"

PVTA has recently installed new bus shelters in other Springfield locations as well, including Harrison Avenue, Main and Taylor Streets, Hancock and King Streets, and Massachusetts Avenue and Westford Circle. The Authority plans to continue expanding the shelter program, in order to provide the most efficient and comfortable transportation service possible.

This is how we get in the spirit . . . STM driver Paul Rheaume prepares to board his PVTA "sleigh". . .

And this is what it's all about.

PVTA busses keep rolling, even in the worst winter weather!

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The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

In Transit

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Tracey L. Thompson

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July, 1988

PVTA Salutes Employees On Transit Appreciation Day

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority offered a rousing "Hats Off!" salute to all public transit employees on May 18th, National Transit Appreciation Day. Months of planning and preparation paid off, in a day-long series of activities that were both informative and fun!

PVTA set up an information booth and held a mid-day news conference in front of the Center Square mall in downtown Springfield. Advisory Board Chairman Peter Klejna served as Master of Ceremonies, and Administrator Robert Manz handed out a number of trophies and awards. There were a number of invited dignitaries on hand, including Springfield Mayor Richard Neal, Holyoke Mayor Martin Dunn, Chicopee Mayor Joseph Chessey, Northampton Mayor David Musante and Westfield Mayor George Varelas.

Dignitaries on stage for Tansit Appreciation Day news conference. Left to right: Springfield Mayor Richard Neal, Holyoke Mayor Martin Dunn, State Transportation UnderSecretary Ann Hershfang, Congressman Edward Boland's Assistant Thomas Foley, Congressman Silvio Conte's Assistant Gary Grumoli, Northampton Mayor David Musante, Westfield Mayor George Varelas and Chicopee Mayor Joseph Chessey. PVTA Advisory Board Chairman Peter Klejna is at podium.

Also in attendance were representatives for Congressmen Edward Boland and Silvio Conte, State Transportation UnderSecretary Ann Hershfang, and R. Max Vigil of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

All of the speakers made strong statements in support of public transit. Three of the mayors read special proclamations honoring Transit Appreciation Day, and Klejna read a proclamation sent by Governor Michael Dukakis. The dignitaries wore gold caps and buttons, reading "Hats Off to PVTA SuperDrivers!," reflecting the theme of PVTA's new advertising campaign. During the ceremony, Ann Hershfang presented the keys to a new special services van to Ann Kos of the Valley Opportunity Council. The van is one of 18 new vehicles that will be given by PVTA to several area communities in the next few months.

The news conference was held on the sidewalk in front of the mall, at a site festively decorated with banners, balloons and a bus! A PVTA bus had been fully outfitted both inside and out with student artwork, and placed up on the sidewalk. It served as a backdrop for the stage, and drew the attention of many passers-by. The Student Murals Bus was created by youngsters at seven schools in five area communities, ranging in age from second grade to sixth. All 180 student artists attended the news conference, wearing the gold "Hats Off!" buttons and tee-shirts saying, "I'm a PVTA SuperRider!" Each class received a round of applause and a hats-off salute for its work. The schools that took part in the project included the Donahue and Lawrence schools in Holyoke,

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ANOTHER BIG "STEP" FOR PVTA

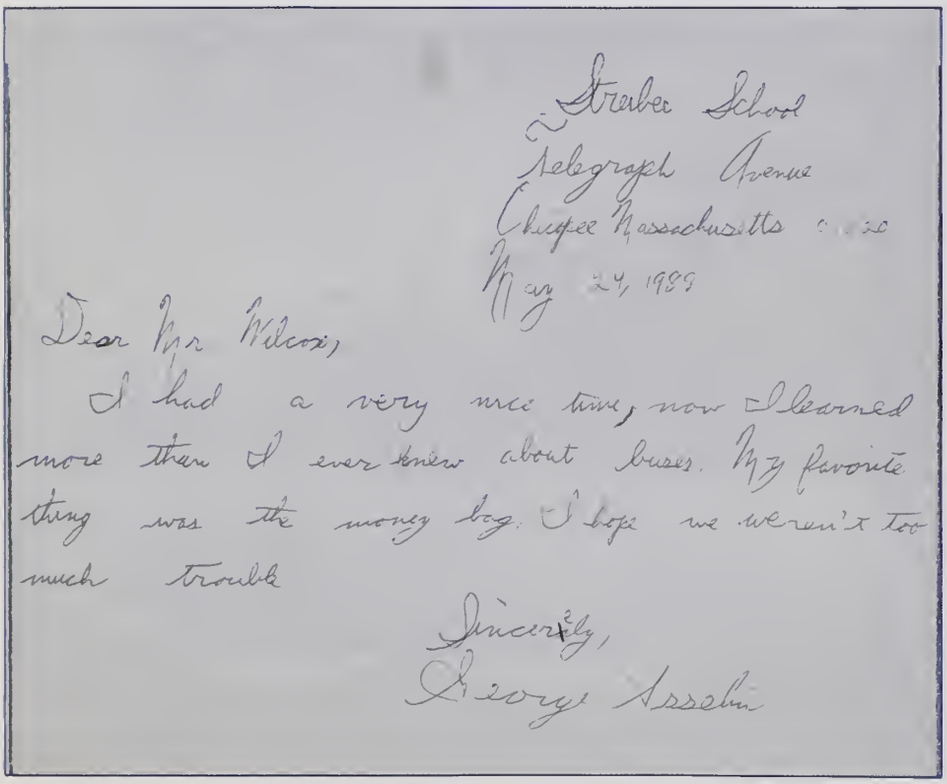
The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority "stepped up" the activity at the Springfield transit facility in April and May, as thirteen classes of youngsters from Chicopee elementary schools took part in the second annual School Transit Education Program (STEP).

The age-level of the students was lowered this year, largely in response to suggestions made by teachers who took part in last year's program, from sixth graders to fourth. That seemed to be an effective change. The students, from nine Chicopee schools, were consistently lively and extremely interested in the program.

STEP includes three basic components: an information session in the classroom, instruction and a ride on a PVTA bus, and a tour of the bus garage. Information Office staffers participated in the program this time around, and will play an even greater role when STEP is expanded in the fall. Marketing Director Tracey Thompson and Information Supervisor Mary Commisso spoke to the kids at the schools, driver Paul Rheaume helped out with the safety instruction on the bus and during the tours, and Springfield Transit Management Director of Operations James Wilcox talked to the students at the garage and led many of the tours.

Director of Operations James Wilcox of Springfield Transit Management talks to fourth-graders from Chicopee's Chapin School, as they wait on the bus for a ride through the bus-wash.

Most of the classes sent thank-you letters or made posters after their field trips, showing how much they enjoyed it. Tentative plans call for STEP to again include Chicopee fourth-graders this fall, but to be expanded to other school systems as well. A good start in that direction has already been made. Three fifth-grade classes from an East Longmeadow elementary school participated in the program this spring, and next year's fifth grade is already looking forward to the trip!



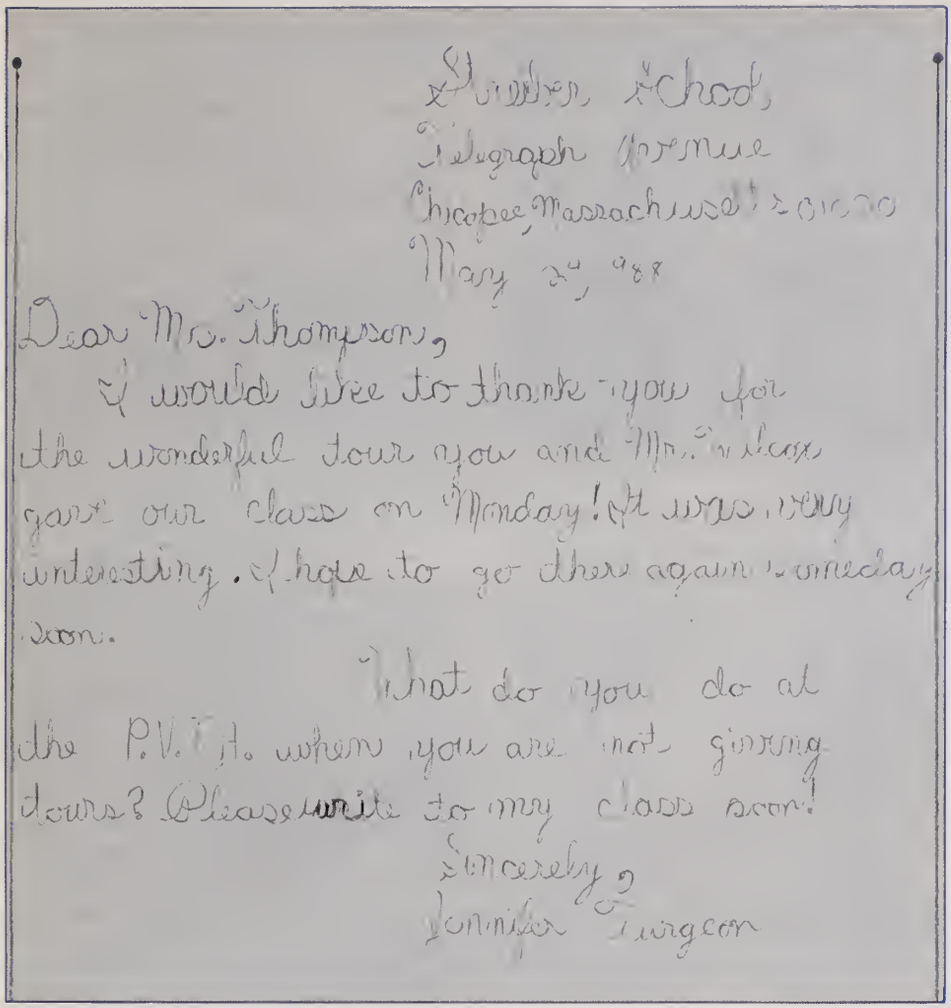
Streiber School
Telegraph Avenue
Chicopee Massachusetts
May 24, 1989

Dear Mr Wilcox,

I had a very nice time, now I learned more than I ever knew about buses. My favorite thing was the money bag. I hope we weren't too much trouble

Sincerely,
George Asselin

Many students sent letters or posters after their tour of the Springfield transit facility. Left, a letter from George Asselin and above right, a letter from Jennifer Turgeon, both students in Miss Reney's class at the Streiber school.



Chapin School,
Telegraph Avenue
Chicopee, Massachusetts 01020
May 2nd, 1988

Dear Mr. Thompson,

I would like to thank you for the wonderful tour you and Mr. Wilcox gave our class on Monday! It was very interesting. I hope to go there again someday soon.

What do you do at the P.V.T.A. when you are not giving tours? Please write to my class soon!

Sincerely,
Jennifer Turgeon

Youngsters from Chicopee's Chapin school wave goodbye, as they prepare to board the PVTA bus that will take them back to school.

PVTA Administrator Heads Safety Council Board

PVTA Administrator Robet D. Manz is wearing another hat these days as well—he's been elected chairman of the Board of Directors for the Western Mass. Safety Council. The primary purpose of the council, of course, is to promote safety in all areas, and Manz sees a natural connection with public transit. "Like many of the people on the council," he says, "I'm involved with industrial safety." Manz says there are two primary reasons for the importance of safety in public transit. One is the potentially disastrous cost of litigation that might follow an accident, either with a PVTA bus on the road or at one of the Authority's bus maintenance facilities. The other is the crucial role that public confidence plays in maintaining bus ridership. "Just like the airlines," Manz says, "if there are accidents the public loses confidence in that form of transportation."

Manz says the Safety Council's board of directors is similar to PVTA's Advisory Board, in that it sets policy and oversees the general direction the agency will take. He says the council "takes on new tasks as new issues come into the safety arena." And there's no shortage of serious problems to focus on. "Today you have alcohol, drug abuse and AIDS in the workplace," he says.

The Safety Council offers drug abuse prevention training for school personnel, and is involved in some of the mandatory classes that convicted drunk drivers are sent to. The council provides public service messages on drunk driving for local television stations and outdoor transit advertising. It also serves as an important information resource for the news media.

Manz says the National Safety Council provides local chapters with printed material for distribution. In addition, the local council offers classes, workshops and seminars on various safety topics. For instance, the council is involved

Continued on Page 4

From The Administrator's Desk . . .

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority and all of its transportation contractors are in a delicate position. The system continues to improve. Our structure changes and equipment changes help all of our dedicated employees to do a better job at providing a much-needed service. At the same time the booming economy tends to drive down our ridership, even in the prepaid college system. As we struggle to hold our ridership we are faced with further cuts in federal funding, and the quiet message from Boston that the budget on the state level will be under-funded this year and next.

Robert D. Manz, Administrator

I see it as a time to redouble our efforts to increase ridership and improve efficiency. The quality of our air, the cost of fuel and parking and the level of our economy in the near future will be in our favor.

Your support to get through this difficult period is appreciated.

Summer Schedules Go Into Effect

Summer schedules are now in effect on three PVTA bus routes. On Route 111, the Express from Springfield to Holyoke Community College, the change means no express trips from Springfield to HCC during the summer months. However, service from the Civic Center to the new Monarch facility on Whitney Avenue will remain the same.

Summer schedules are also in effect on Routes 701 and 702/703. The Route 701 bus does not go from Northampton and Easthampton to HCC during the summer. And riders on Route 702/703 must pay the regular PVTA fare from now until September.

A number of schedule changes have gone into effect on bus routes serving Holyoke, Chicopee, South Hadley and Westfield. The changes are aimed at improving efficiency and providing service in areas where the need is greatest.

The Route 206 and 207 busses no longer serve the T.R.W. plant in Holyoke. Some trips to the Digital Equipment plant on Southampton Street in Westfield have been eliminated. And Route 211/212 has been changed slightly in order to serve several new apartment and condo complexes in South Hadley Center. Residents of Kenlee Gardens, Riverwood Terrace, Riverwood I, Riverwood II and Falls Woods have easy access to PVTA busses now. Employees of Brand-Rex Company, Nonotuck Manufacturing Division could also employ public transit on the new route.

Transit Appreciation Day

Continued from Page 1

Robinson and Granger schools in Agawam, Freedman school in Springfield, Birchland Park in East Longmeadow and Blueberry Hill in Longmeadow.

PVTA Administrator Robert Manz announced the winner of the 2nd Annual "Rider's Choice Driver of the Year" contest. Driver William Bousquet of Springfield Transit Management was the winner, after being nominated by teachers Karen Brengi and Minie Liberty and their class of children at the Springfield Day Nursery. "Children have an instinctive feel of whether or not an adult is sincere and trustworthy," they wrote. "We in Room 1 chose Billy Bousquet as Bus Driver of the Year." Bousquet received a plaque, a special gift, and two tickets for a bus trip to a Boston Red Sox game at Fenway Park, courtesy of U.S. Express. Brengi and Liberty received a one-day trip for two to Atlantic City, courtesy of Peter Pan Bus Lines.

The winners of the 1988 PVTA Bus Roadeo also received their trophies and cash prizes at the news conference. The Roadeo was held at UMass/Amherst on May 1st. The winners were: first place, Mike Hamilton of UMass Transit Service; second place, Bruce Allen of

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More pictures, related story, page 6 & 7

PVTA Administrator Heads Safety Council Board

Continued from Page 3

in training area fire, police and emergency personnel in the proper methods of handling hazardous waste. Manz says the Safety Council provides a forum for all of the people working in various segments of the safety field, to exchange thoughts and ideas that benefit everyone.

During his term as chairman of the board, Manz says he has three main goals. "I want to see the Safety Council get stronger," he says. "I want us to get more companies involved in the effort, and make sure that funds available for safety purposes are put to good use."

ARTWORK ON THE MOVE

PVTA and a Holyoke elementary school are working together to give more recognition to the arts in public schools. Three busses that normally run on Holyoke Routes 202, 204 and 205 were outfitted as "Travelling Art Galleries," and could be seen by passengers and passing motorists through the end of June.

Donahue School art teacher Susan Boss came up with the idea of displaying student talent on the busses, and received strong support from Donahue principal Mary McGinnis. Boss' class of fourth-graders created more than sixty pieces of artwork for the project including a large mural that measured 21" x 70" in its final stage. The pictures were featured on the rear of the Holyoke busses and on the interior.

The large mural was created in several stages. Boss says she first had the students draw individual figures of people. Then she variously enlarged and reduced them until all of the people were roughly the same size. Boss next arranged the figures for the mural, pasted them on poster board, enlarged and reduced *that* picture until it was the right size, and painted the final version.

The smaller pictures created for the inside of the busses were somewhat simpler. The kids used construction paper, paint, markers and even glitter in their pictures. Each card measured 11" x 28", and they were done on stiff, glossy poster board. The cards were too large for the school's laminating machine, so Boss and other school staffers spent hours covering them with fine plastic wrap for extra protection. Twenty of the smaller cards were placed inside each of the three busses. The artwork was to be returned to Donahue school at the end of the project, so that it could be displayed at the school.

The proud artists—fifth-graders from the Donahue school in Holyoke pose with principal Mary McGinnis (standing, back row, far right), in front of the mural they created for the Travelling Art Galleries project.

The Transcript-Telegram donated funds to have the large mural printed on permanent plastic signs. PVTA donated the space on the busses and printed additional outside signs calling attention to the student artwork.

The Western Mass Safety Council also participated in the project, by having new transit signs printed highlighting the theme "Watch for kids . . . all ways!" Other Safety Council signs were used on the sides of the Travelling Art Gallery busses.

The project was a successful, cooperative venture that showcased some of the excellent work being done in local schools, and PVTA looks forward to doing it again next year.

Inside the bus, the student artists excitedly point out the individual bus cards they created.

Transit Appreciation Day

Continued from Page 4

Western Mass Bus Lines; third place, Truman Easton of Springfield Transit Management; fourth place, Lenny Houle of STM; fifth place, Glen Lyford of UMass Transit. The cash prizes were awarded as follows: first place, $300; second place, $200; third place, $100; fourth place, $75 and fifth place, $50. The roadeo includes both a written test and a timed obstacle course, and drivers could win extra cash for each section they completed with a perfect score. First-place winner Mike Hamilton will represent PVTA at the International Bus Roadeo in Montreal this October.

PVTA Information staffers deserve extra credit for their hard work on May 18th. Information Supervisor Mary Commisso and staffers Kay Lanzetta and Naomi Wilkerson helped set up and decorate the site, ran the information table and assisted in coordinating the day's activities. Administrative Assistant Marlene Connor was a great asset during the preparation and planning stage. STM General Manager Peter Hefler, Director of Operations Jim Wilcox and Deputy Director Ernie Harris did a superb job handling diverse transportation requirements. And Center Square Marketing Director Kevin Morin donated time, assistance, space at the mall and six $50 mall gift certificates. HATS OFF TO THEM ALL!

(More pictures on Page 11)

PVTA Advisory Board Chairman Peter Klejna (left) presents Springfield Transit Management Driver William Bousquet with the winner's plaque, in the 2nd annual "Rider's Choice" Driver of the Year contest.

PVTA Administrator Robert Manz (right) presents driver Mike Hamilton of UMass Transit with the 1st-place trophy for the 1988 PVTA Bus Roadeo.

"A Proclamation from the Governor"

WHEREAS: Public transportation is essential to the growth and continued economic, social and environmental well-being of Pioneer Valley; and

WHEREAS: The public transit provides accessibility for many residents to the benefit of our society and economy; and . . .

WHEREAS: The PVTA bus drivers and staff safely and capably transport those passengers throughout the region; and

WHEREAS: Active recognition by all citizens is important to mass transit and to the people who provide the transit service to the community; . . .

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS, Governor of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim May 18th, 1988 as TRANSIT APPRECIATION DAY.

STM SAYS, "HATS OFF!"

by Peter H. Hefler, General Manager

In addition to activities that were sponsored and organized by the PVTA, the Authority's largest carrier, Springfield Transit Management, also had several events that took place on May 18th at the STM property at 2840 Main Street, Springfield.

At 4:00 a.m. Director of Operations James W. Wilcox and I served coffee and donuts to drivers as they reported to work and picked up their coaches in the garage. STM President Peter Picknelly, Sr., well known and highly respected in the bus industry, stopped by to wish the drivers the best and express his appreciation for the fine job STM's 140 operators do each day.

A little later in the morning, STM Controller and Office Manager Kevin Lebo served coffee and donuts to the office staff. And Director of Maintenance James Besaw offered the same courtesy to the day shift mechanics and foremen.

The drivers operated their busses on May 18th, wearing special hats and buttons to let the public know about Transit Appreciation Day. These items were worn the full week from May 16th to May 21st. Mechanics also were issued special hats for the week.

At 10:00 a.m., the STM management hosted a buffet lunch for all employees, served in the body shop of the maintenance facility. The buffet ran until 2:30 in the afternoon, so that all day operators and shift maintenance personnel would have a chance to have lunch. At the buffet, a grab bag of various coupons and hand-out materials was distributed to each employee.

There were also seven drawings for certificates for dinner for two at some of the area's best known restaurants. Four of the drawings were for the operators. The other three were for office and maintenance personnel. The drawings were done by Vincent Gonzalez, Business Agent for the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 448, which represents STM employees.

Evening drivers were served a buffet in the crew room at 5:00 p.m. and maintenance evening mechanics were served at the same time in the maintenance dining facility.

Perhaps the highlight of the day was the presentation of certificates of appreciation to all employees of STM. They ranged from 46 years of service at STM and previous companies, down to less than one year. Employees with over 20 years of service had gold seals on their certificates; those with up to 20 years had red seals.

Overall, the reaction to all of the events was totally positive, and plans are already being discussed for additional activities for the 1989 Transit Appreciation Day.

Chow line! STM drivers, wearing their gold "Super-Driver" hats, line up to enjoy a buffet lunch.

"You win!" As Ernest Harris, Deputy Director of Operations at STM, looks on, mechanic George Percy discovers he has won a gift certificate to a local restaurant.

STM mechanics line up for their turn at the luncheon buffet. More than 200 STM employees took part in the day's activities.

In The Fast Lane

PVTA provided special bus shuttle service for two big events in downtown Springfield recently. When President Reagan spoke at a World Affairs Council luncheon in April, PVTA worked with the Springfield Parking Authority to alleviate potential traffic jams. Free shuttle service was provided from the Liberty/Chestnut lot to the Civic Center. Total ridership on the shuttle was 1400 passengers.

PVTA also provided free shuttle service on May 14th, when the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs sponsored a hot-air balloon festival and pancake breakfast. Busses ran from the Ten-Centre to the grounds of S.T.C.C. for the early-morning and late-afternoon balloon launchings. Busses also shuttled spectators from the college downtown to the breakfast and then back to the parking lot. Total ridership was just under 300 passengers.

Court Square looked like this during President Reagan's visit, but luncheon guests who used the free PVTA shuttle avoided the traffic.

* * * * *

STM General Manager Peter Hefler and PVTA Marketing Director Tracey Thompson took part in career day at Kennedy Junior High in Springfield during April. They spoke to dozens of students in several classes about jobs that are available in the public transit field.

STM General Manager Peter Hefler talks to students at Kennedy Junior High career day.

* * * * *

PVTA Information Supervisor Mary Commisso lent a helping hand to new nurses at Baystate Medical Center. Because of the current nursing shortage, the hospital has hired a number of recruits from the Phillipines. Commisso spoke with about three dozen nurses at three orientation sessions, explaining how the bus system works here and showing the nurses how to read PVTA maps and schedules.

PVTA Administrative Assistant Marlene Connor speaks at a "Blueprint 2000" community forum at HCC.

* * * * *

The Amalgamated Transit Union Local 448 staffed one of the booths at the pancake breakfast, helping to serve orange juice to the hungry crowd. Workers at the booth included union Business Agent Vincent Gonzales, Treasurer Louis Smola, Joe Casineau, Manny Baez, Pearl DeFilio and Mike Tancrati.

STM dispatcher Keith Ellsworth, wife Donna and son Christian took advantage of the free PVTA shuttle to STCC, to watch the hot-air balloon launchings.

* * * * *

PVTA Administrative Assistant Marlene Connor was invited in March to participate in the Hampden County regional hearing for

"Blueprint 2000," Lt. Governor Evelyn Murphy's effort to target key issues facing the Commonwealth in the years ahead. Connor spoke at a panel discussion on problems related to our physical environment. Recommendations that came out of the hearing include making the federal government more aware of transportation problems, and increasing coordination efforts to locate future business and residential centers along established transportation corridors.

* * * * *

PVTA Marketing and Public Relations Director Tracey L. Thompson addressed the Springfield Rotary Club in May. Thompson talked about the importance to all citizens of public transportation, and asked for their support in the battle against continuing federal budget cuts.

* * * * *

Four new members have joined the PVTA Advisory Board in the last few months. They are: Richard Reidy of Chicopee, Margherita Burnett of Easthampton, William Foley of Holyoke and Julia Chmura of Ludlow. Welcome, new Board members!

* * * * *

PVTA Information Supervisor Mary Commisso (back row, second from right) poses with seven new Baystate Medical Center nurses, recruited from the Phillipines.

Congratulations to PVTA Information staffer Mary-Kay Shea, who graduated in June from Cathedral high school. Shea plans to attend Mt. Holyoke College in the fall. Shea worked in the office for about a year. Her ready smile and helpful manner will be missed.

47 Compete At 7th Annual Bus Roadeo

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority hosted its seventh annual "Bus Roadeo" in May, at the UMass/Amherst campus. A total of 47 drivers from three of the Authority's carriers competed for trophies and cash prizes.

The purpose of the roadeo is to promote safety. There is a written test and a timed obstacle course, which includes eleven events designed to try even the most expert drivers' skills. In addition, drivers must make a pre-trip bus inspection on a vehicle set aside as the "defect bus." It has several planted defects, such as burned-out headlights, improperly working doors, etc. The contestant has five minutes to find all the problems.

Judges for the roadeo every year are drawn from the state Department of Public Utilities, local and state police departments, the Registry of Motor Vehicles, the Air National Guard, Travel Time Travel agency, Springfield school bus drivers and other volunteers. The judges are placed at each event on the obstacle course, and two judges ride on board to time the driver and grade him or her on smoothness of operation and safety habits.

IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE!

A new incentive was added to the roadeo this year. In addition to the cash prizes for the top five finishers, every contestant had the opportunity to win $10 for every event completed within the time limit and with a perfect score. Proving that the course is actually a lot tougher than it may appear, the largest amount won by any

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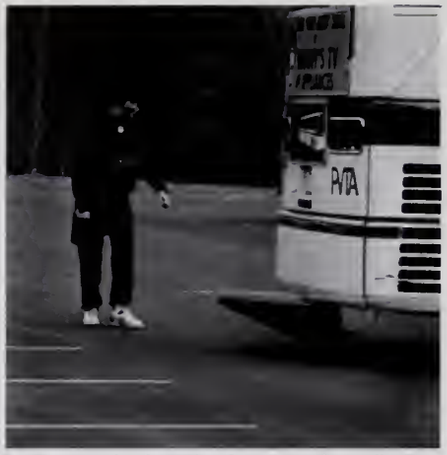
7th Annual Bus Roadeo

Continued from Page 9

driver was $50—for five out of eleven obstacles completed perfectly. A total of $710 in extra-incentive cash was given away, to 29 contestants who won amounts ranging from $10 to $50.

This year's first-place winner was Mike Hamilton, a driver for UMass Transit Service. He won a trophy and $300, and will represent PVTA at the International Bus Roadeo in Montreal this October. Second place went to Bruce Allen of Western Mass Bus Lines; he won $200. Truman Easton and Lenny Houle of Springfield Transit Management placed third and fourth, winning $100 and $75, respectively; and Glen Lyford of UMass Transit came in fifth, winning $50.

PVTA held another major safety-oriented event earlier this spring. The Seventh Annual Safety Awards Presentation was held at the Holiday Inn in Holyoke on March 13th. More than a hundred drivers and mechanics were honored for years of accident-free driving or industrial safety. PVTA Safety Coordinator William McCullough said the 99 drivers and 14 mechanics receiving awards rolled up a total of 938 years of safety. The drivers and mechanics represented four of PVTA's carriers: Springfield Transit Management, Western Mass Bus Lines, Longueil Transportation and UMass Transit Service.



"OK, that's quite far enough . . ."

Springfield Mayor Richard Neal was guest speaker, and he praised PVTA for its fine performance year after year. STM General Manager Peter Hefler offered opening remarks, followed by comments from Safety Coordinator McCullough. PVTA Administrator Robert Manz presented the awards to those who had compiled 15 years of safety or more.

The awards for employees with three to 14 years of safety were presented by: Marshall Hanson for Longueil, Bill Barrett for UMass Transit, Pete Cavanaugh for Western Mass Bus Lines, and James Wilcox for STM.

The following list includes drivers and mechanics who were honored for 15 years or more: from STM, drivers Kenneth Chapin (21 years), Truman Easton (21), John Lewis (20), Clayton Simino (19), Charles Shaver (16), Allan McPherson (15), Ronald Benoit (15), and Rafael Gonzalez (15); from WMBL, driver Barbara Raymond (15); from Longueil, mechanic Stan Krahala (19); and from UMass Transit, mechanics David McCulloch (19) and Charles Grybko (16).

"HERE HE COMES . . ."

"AND THERE HE GOES!"

More Memories Of A Special Day

Smile for the camera! Some of the students artists at Transit Appreciation Day ceremonies proudly display their Super-Rider tee-shirts.

Student artists from the Donahue school in Holyoke pose in front of the bus mural they created.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

It's a bright new look for PVTA busses—90% of the fleet is being outfitted with Luminator electronic destination signs. The Authority has purchased a total of 145 Luminators, at a cost of approximately $3,000 each.

The new signs feature larger characters made up of fluorescent dots that can easily be read more than twenty feet away. They are also computerized, which will make life easier for PVTA drivers. Jim Besaw, Director of Maintenance at Springfield Transit Management, says the drivers will merely have to punch in a code number from now on when they have to change destination. With the older "turn-curtain" type of signs, Besaw says, they had to get out of their seats and manually reset the signs on the front and side of the bus.

Besaw says another major advantage of the Luminators is their adaptability to change and growth in the system. "These will allow us to add on new routes at any time by just programming the information in," he says. The older signs did not have that capability."

The Luminators will be divided among PVTA's four carriers. Besaw says UMass Transit Service will receive 26 of them. Longueil Transportation will get 14, Western Mass Bus Lines will have 6 and the remaining 99 will go to Springfield Transit Management.

LONGER VAN HOURS OFFER MORE FLEXIBILITY

Three agencies that contract with PVTA to provide special transportation service have extended their operating hours. The result means improved service to the elderly and disabled.

PVTA Executive Assistant Marlene Connor says the longer hours are now in effect in Holyoke, Chicopee and Agawam. Connor says, "We want to make the van hours more comparable to fixed route bus lines, to increase the mobility of people with disabilities and senior citizens. This also allows them more freedom in arranging doctor appointments, personal excursions and other trips."

The longer van hours in Holyoke are on Tuesday and Thursday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Valley Opportunity Council in Chicopee has extended operations from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, and Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Agawam Council on Aging has lengthened its hours Tuesday through Friday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

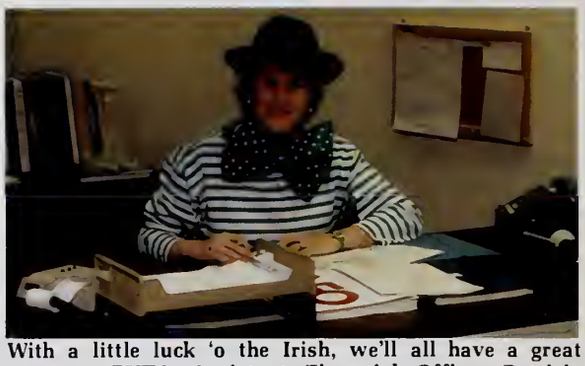
Connor says she hopes new, longer van schedules will be well-received and successful. "If there's enough of a demand," she says, "maybe we can supply even more transportation as the need grows."

In another development concerning PVTA special transportation services, the towns of Ware and Granby have received new vans. The 1988 Ford vans replace 1982 Dodge vehicles that had rolled up well over 100,000 miles.

PVTA Administrator Robert Manz presented the keys to Ware's two new vans to Millie Cygan, Director of the local Council on Aging, and Gertrude Hamelin, Ware's PVTA Advisory Board member and driver for the in-town shuttle program. Granby's new van was awarded during ceremonies at the PVTA Advisory Board meeting on June 8th. Council on Aging Director Frances Mullen accepted the keys.

PVTA Administrative Assistant Marlene Connor says, "This is part of our effort to continue to improve services for the elderly and handicapped." The Authority has purchased a total of 18 new vans, which will be awarded to several area communities over the next few months.

PVTA STARTS NEW SPECIAL SERVICES PROGRAM



With a little luck 'o the Irish, we'll all have a great summer. PVTA Assistant Financial Officer Patricia O'Leary Robitaille showed her special style in celebrating St. Patrick's day.

A new coordinated transportation program gets underway this summer, aimed at improving special services for the elderly and disabled. The PVTA Special Services coordination program starts a six-month trial run on July 1st in the communities of Holyoke, Chicopee and South Hadley.

PVTA Special Services Coordinator Jo-Anne Walsh says this is the natural culmination of the state-funded Transportation Improvement Program she's been working under for the past 18 months. In fact, the remainder of the state grant is being used to get the new program on its feet. By the end of the year, she says, it should be firmly established.

The Valley Opportunity Council will be the lead agency in the program. VOC will work with three providers at the start: the Holyoke Council on Aging, the South Hadley Council on Aging, and the Geriatric Authority of Holyoke.

It's hoped more providers will join the system later on. Walsh explains how the system works: "Primarily, we'll be taking a request for a ride and finding the best way to provide it, using all available resources." The result will be more efficient use of vans and drivers at the provider agencies, and a greater ability to meet the existing transportation need.

A number of agencies have agreed to use the new system and pay a set rate for the rides their clients receive. They include the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, the state Department of Mental Retardation, the Pioneer Developmental Center and others. Seniors and disabled people will also benefit from the new coordinated services. Walsh calls it "a win-win situation." She says the human service agencies will benefit by receiving better-quality transportation service for their clients, at a lower cost. PVTA benefits by being able to maintain paratransit operations in the face of continuing federal budget cuts.

Walsh will continue in her current position as PVTA Special Services Coordinator. She's excited about the new program, and expects it to fill an important need. "This will clearly supplement the existing services," she says, "filling in the gaps in both the Dial-A-Ride and the other Subscription Service programs. It will also allow us to provide more service, especially at night and on the weekend."

Winter may seem like a dim memory now, but the PVTA "Storm-busters" remember! The crew was out in this storm on February 12th, keeping PVTA busses safe and on schedule. Above: STM supervisor John Colkos, mechanic Jim Morini, Deputy Director of Operations Ernest Harris, Supervisor Ray Jones and Shelter Maintenance Man Jose Hernendez. Right: "Clean your windshield and check your oil, sir?"

If you have any information for the next issue of *In-Transit*, or questions about the newsletter, please call PVTA Marketing and Public Relations Director Tracey Thompson at 732-6248.

MASS. Y3.PVTA1: 3/16

The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

In Transit

Edited by
Tracey L. Thompson

Issue No. 16
December, 1988

Colorful New Contest For PVTA!

PVTA riders had a chance this fall to color their way to valuable prizes, with the first "back to work, Back to School, Back to the PVTA!" coloring contest. Prizes valued at more than $2,000 were donated by Peter Pan Bus Lines, U. S. Express, Baystate West, the Mall at Center Square and Milton Bradley. Fifty entries were received, and eleven winners were selected in four age divisions.

The contest featured the full-page newspaper ad that was used to kick off the Authority's new advertising campaign last April. At that time the ad was run in full color, but for the contest it appeared in black and white, and contestants were invited to color it in themselves.

A tremendous amount of talent and imagination was shown in the entries. Several people used metallic paints and glitter. One entry had the PVTA bus entirely coated with gold glitter! Another used real makeup on all the faces. One contestant made real cotton clouds, another put felt clothing on some of the people, and still another installed wax paper windows in the house, car and bus. Naturally, Superdriver and the other characters in the ad wore a stunning array of costumes and colors.

"The entries were just terrific," says PVTA Marketing Director Tracey Thompson. "Those entering ranged from four years old to 74, so obviously the contest was a lot of fun for everyone."

Choosing the winners was an extremely difficult task. A panel of four judges rated the entries in four

Continued on Page 3

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTION
MAY 30 1989
University of Massachusetts Depository Copy

Account Executive Sheila Cunningham and artist John Hentz, both of PVTA's advertising agency Perreault & Tompkins, judging entries in the "Back to the PVTA!" coloring contest.

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Saturday Service in Northampton

PVTA has started Saturday service on Route 706, serving many of Northampton's subsidized housing developments. The Saturday service is fare-free, just as it is during the week on Route 706. The service is subsidized by the city of Northampton, for the aid and convenience of many low-income residents who rely heavily on public transit.

The Saturday service was originally requested by Northampton residents. The city then petitioned the PVTA Advisory Board, and the Board approved the expansion. Route 706 connects residents of the Florence Heights, Meadowbrook and Hampton Gardens neighborhoods with King St. and downtown Northampton.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz.

From the Administrator's Desk . . . .

PVTA has grown and improved its operations for the past 15 years, but for the most part that has been possible due to the availability of tax dollars supporting public transit. As we approach the 1990's, those tax dollars are shrinking as our expenses increase. It is a time when the Authority and the community must band together to keep transit moving forward.

PVTA must become more efficient, providing better service without increasing costs. But at the same time the community must improve its support for transit so that we *can* operate more efficiently, carry more people and increase passenger revenue. Generating more revenue from increased ridership is a better answer for everyone than collecting more revenue through higher fares.

The community needs to support transit by taking part in programs that encourage employees to use transit; by providing better access to busses and opening up the streets to transit vehicles. Cooperation is what is needed now, in order to sustain what we have achieved in the '70's and '80's well into the '90's.

Easton Ropes State Roadeo Win

STM driver Truman Easton (center), with PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz (left) and Director of Programs and Planning Marlene B. Connor (right). Easton received the large trophy on the left for his state roadeo win; the MARTA cup on the right will stay with PVTA until another transit authority wins it.

Veteran Springfield Transit Management driver Truman Easton edged out twenty-two other competitors to win first place at the second annual statewide bus roadeo. Easton received a $300 cash prize and a handsome trophy for his efforts. PVTA also took possession of the state roadeo cup, which will stay here until another transit authority wins it away.

The state roadeo is sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities (MARTA). The event was held on Saturday, October 29th, at Bridgewater State College in Bridgewater. Twenty-three drivers from nine transit authorities, including the M.B.T.A., participated in the event. Most of the entrants were the winners of their local bus roadeos. Representing PVTA were Easton and Lenny Houle, also of STM. 1988 roadeo winner Mike Hamilton of UMass Transit Service was scheduled to drive, but he was unable to attend.

PVTA Director of Programs and Planning Marlene Connor calls the state roadeo a learning experience for the drivers. "It gives them a chance to meet in a friendly yet competetive atmosphere." she says. "They can share experiences and safe driving tips, but they're also out there to win." Connor says the roadeo is definitely a family event. Many drivers bring their entire families along to watch them compete.

The roadeo consists of a timed obstacle course, which includes eleven separate events. Drivers score points based on their performance in each event, and the highest point total wins. The course is comparable to most local roadeo courses. Having won the trophy, it will be PVTA's turn next year to host the MARTA competition. Connor says plans for that are already underway. Anyone interested in helping with the state roadeo should call Connor at 732-6248.

Colorful Contest . . . *Continued from Page 1*

categories: originality, neatness, artistic ability and overall impact. The judges were Barbara Pohl and Jo-Anne Walsh of PVTA, and Sheila Cunningham and John Hentz of the Authority's ad agency, Perreault & Tompkins. Every entry received one to five points in each category, and those with the highest point totals won.

A prize awards ceremony was held at Center Square on October 31st, with SuperDriver acting as emcee. Representing the prize sponsors were Kevin Morin of Center Square, Dolores Reis of Baystate West, Paul Lemieux of Peter Pan Bus Lines, Mark Morris of Milton Bradley and Gregory Pedersen of U. S. Express. In addition to the contest prizes, SuperDriver gave away three December PVTA bus passes and fifty gift certificates for Friendly Ice Cream half-gallons.

Most of the winners in PVTA's coloring contest received their prizes in a ceremony at Center Square.

Here is the list of winners:

Kids 4-8:

FIRST:
8-year-old Byran Grabowski of West Springfield won a $100 prize package from Milton Bradley;

SECOND:
7-year-old David Angers of East Otis won a $75 Milton Bradley prize pack;

THIRD:
4-year-old Amanda Taylor of South Hadley won a $50 Milton Bradley prize pack.

Kids 9-13:

FIRST:
11-year-old Janet Bishop of Wilbraham won a $100 Milton Bradley prize package;

SECOND:
9-year-old Gerard Smith of Holyoke won a $75 Milton Bradley prize package;

THIRD:
13-year-old Lynn Boutote of Wilbraham won a $50 prize package from Milton Bradley.

Students 14-22:

FIRST:
14-year-old Nicholas Axas of Longmeadow received two gift certificates, valued at $200 apiece, for Center Square and Baystate West;

SECOND:
16-year-old Tammy Nardi of Feeding Hills won two Gift Certificates, valued at $150 each, for Center Square and Baystate West;

THIRD:
22-year-old Audrey Antosz of Easthampton received two gift certificates, valued at $100 each, for Center Square and Baystate West.

Adults 23 and up:

FIRST:
60-year-old Ann Misciewicz of Chicopee won a three-day trip for two to Washington D. C. from Peter Pan Bus Lines;

SECOND:
27-year-old Sue O'Neill of Holyoke won an overnight trip for two to the Trump's Castle Casino in Atlantic City, from U.S. Express.

PVTA congratulates all of this year's winners, and looks forward to an even better contest next year!

Authority Moves Toward Third-Party Contracting

PVTA is now completing a process begun last year, of competetively procuring service contracts in compliance with UMTA (Urban Mass Transportation Administration) guidelines.

John T. Doolittle Associates has been hired to assist the Authority in the process of preparing necessary bid and contract documentation. Doolittle's task also includes studying the entire PVTA route structure, with an eye toward possible improvements in service.

UMTA has been encouraging transit authorities to seek competition in service and operation contracts, under the premise that increasing competition will lower costs and improve service quality. UMTA officials met with the PVTA Advisory Board in October to discuss third-party contracting.

The changes resulting from the Doolittle study could have an impact on all PVTA carriers, but the Authority will seek to make any transitions as smooth as possible. Completion of the competetive procurement process is expected to take several months.

A Special Role for Special Services

ABOVE: A new van for Chicopee! Ann Kos (right), Director of the Valley Opportunity Council, accepts the keys from PVTA Director of Programs and Planning Marlene B. Connor and Special Services Coordinator Jo-Anne Walsh. BELOW: Belchertown Council on Aging Director Louise Wadsworth accepts the "key" to a new van, with driver Richard Panto.

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority has taken major steps toward increasing its ability to provide special transportation services to the elderly and handicapped. The Authority increased its capacity by twenty percent in fiscal 1988. Eighteen new vans were purchased, bringing PVTA's special services fleet to a total of 66 wheelchair lift-equipped vans, three station wagons and seven minibusses.

PVTA Director of Programs and Planning Marlene B. Connor says this success story is no accident. "We've known for years that there's been an increasing need for special transportation services," she says, "not only among traditional elderly and disabled client populations, but also from human service agencies." Connor says PVTA has worked hard to make the system grow and change in order to respond to the need. "Now I feel we're taking a positive, leading role to meet those needs," she says.

The new vans were received and awarded to a number of different PVTA member communities over the past several months. In some cases the new vehicles replaced older vans that had rolled up more than 100,000 miles, but in most instances the new vehicles will allow the cities and towns to provide additional service. Connor says PVTA will also greatly expand its work with human service agencies with the larger fleet. "We had a contract with the State Department of Mental Retardation using six vans," Connor says. "In Fiscal '88 we laid the groundwork for doubling that commitment, and in Fiscal '89 we're now using 14 vans to transport DMR clients."

PVTA has come a long way since the late 1970's, when nine member communities used cars, vans, busses and even limousines to provide special transportation services. In FY '88 the Authority carried more than twelve million passengers on fixed-route busses, and another 322,000 senior citizens and handicapped passengers on its special services fleet. PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz says, "The Authority is strongly committed in the years ahead to continued improvements in the effectiveness and delivery of special transportation services."

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz talks with NCBA Director Ann Wright, at dedication ceremonies for Springfield's four new vans.

ABOVE: NCBA driver Willie Wilson (right) helps demonstrate the wheelchair lift with client Helen Solo (in chair), at dedication ceremonies for Springfield's new vans. BELOW: Ludlow Council on Aging driver Phyllis Reis is happy with that town's new vans.

PASS SALES PASS LAST YEAR

PVTA increased the number of monthly bus passes sold this summer, with a successful half-price promotion. Customers who came in to buy a July pass were able to purchase their August pass for half-price.

Information staffers sold 346 more passes for July and August than they sold during the same period last year, representing an increase of 8.7%. It is significant to note that sales either rose or remained steady in every pass category ($10, $20, $25 and $30 passes) during the promotion period. For example, sales of $25 passes rose 17.5% over July of 1987, $20 passes were up by 12.5% in August, and $30 pass sales in August rose 16% over the year before. A total of 3,692 passes were sold during the promotion, up from 3,616 in '87.

The summer months traditionally see a decrease in bus ridership, as students leave school and workers go on vacation. The pass promotion helped to stabilize the number of riders who regularly purchase monthly passes throughout the year.

"Friendly" Promotion For PVTA

PVTA has just completed another successful promotion with the Friendly Ice Cream Corporation of Wilbraham. The promotion resulted in increased bus token sales for PVTA over a ten-week period, and positive publicity for Friendly Ice Cream.

The company donated 600 gift certificates for Sundae Snack Cups and Half-Gallons, valued at a total of $1,474, for the promotion. Bus riders who purchased a token ten-pack received a Snack Cup gift certificate valued at $1.29, and those who bought token twenty-packs were given half-gallon certificates valued at $3.29. In addition, PVTA discounted the price of tokens during the ten-week period. Token ten-packs, normally sold for $5.50, cost $5.00, while twenty-packs that usually cost $11.00 were sold for $10.00.

The promotion ran from August 15th-October 28th. It was advertised on radio, in the Springfield newspaper, and through both interior and exterior ads on PVTA busses. Advertising followed PVTA's new campaign theme, "Let's Go Back to the PVTA!"

Token sales from mid-August through October were up by about 3,300, or 46.6% higher than the same period of 1987. A similar promotion with Friendly Ice Cream was run for eight weeks in 1987, from June 1st-July 24th. Comparing the success of both events, token sales during the 1988 promotion were up by more than 500, or 7.4% over the 1987 promotion period.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz says the Authority encourages the use of tokens for riders who commute by bus on a less-than-daily basis. Manz calls tokens an easy, economical alternative to using exact change. PVTA also sells monthly bus passes, which save the daily commuter at least 10% over the cost of paying cash fares.

In The Fast Lane

Two new faces have joined PVTA headquarters at 1341 Main Street... Ken Sporleder has joined the Information staff on a part-time basis, and Hedy Fennell has been hired as a part-time clerk-typist.

* * * * *

Congratulations to two veteran STM drivers who are planning to retire at the end of this year. Kenneth Chapin racked up 40 years in the driver's seat, and Charlie Butler has driven for 22 years. Both men started their careers with Springfield Street Railway and then went to Springfield Transit Management. Chapin, by the way, was named PVTA Driver of the Year in 1985. Best wishes to both!

UMass Transit Service driver Mike Hamilton faces the barrel obstacle as he competes in the International Bus Roadeo in Montreal.

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The Information staff again set up information booths at Holyoke Community College and Springfield Technical Community College at the start of the fall semester. Simone Couture did a great job helping new students with information about bus maps, routes and schedules.

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STM General Manager Peter Hefler and PVTA Marketing Director Tracey Thompson took part in this year's "Business Week in the Schools," a project sponsored by the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce and the Springfield School Volunteers. Both spoke to elementary school kids about what kind of jobs will be waiting for them when they graduate.

* * * * *

PVTA is now the official new owner of the former firehouse on North Main St. in Springfield. Administrator Robert D. Manz says the Authority has given the city a check for $110,000, and the deed for the building and property has been transferred to PVTA. The historic building will be renovated and become the Authority's new headquarters. Design plans are on schedule, and work is slated to begin sometime next year.

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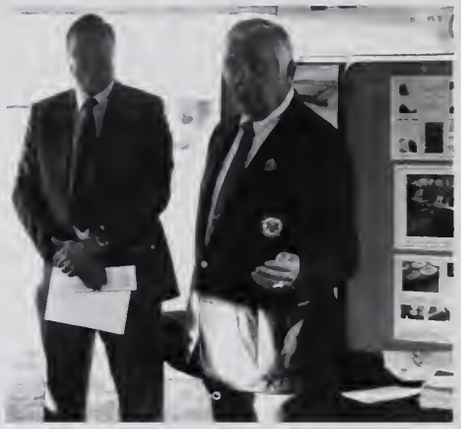
An open house was held at the PVTA bus facility in the Northampton Industrial Park in October, as part of a celebration of the successful completion of the park. Mayor David B. Musante presided at ceremonies held under a tent in the traffic circle near the PVTA garage, and Pittsfield Congressman Silvio O. Conte was guest speaker. Both men praised the companies that have located in the park, for providing jobs for area residents and helping to improve Northampton's economic base.



1st District Congressman Silvio Conte (right) speaks at ceremonies in the Northampton Industrial Park. Northampton Mayor David B. Musante (left) introduced the Congressman and other dignitaries.

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Information Supervisor Mary Commisso, STM Supervisor D. J. Gonzalez and Marketing Director Tracey Thompson teamed up to address a class of hispanic students at Springfield Technical Community College in November. Teacher Tom Kerner invited the PVTA staffers in to help the students understand how the bus system works, and to learn important terms such as route map, schedules, tokens and bus passes.

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Service on Route 107 (State/Boston Rd./K-Mart/Eastfield Mall) has

Another great month at STM! Driver Peter Stevens (left) enjoys coffee and donuts served by General Manager Peter Hefler (right) and Local 448 Business Agent Vin Gonzalez (center).

been extended out to the Eastfield Mall on certain trips. The extended service on Route 107 started in September. Peter Picknelly Sr. of Peter Pan Bus Lines had recommended that the Eastfield Mall service be run by Springfield Transit Management, because STM could operate it more economically than Peter Pan could with Route 502.

* * * * *

PVTA expanded service to the Springfield/Memorial Industrial Park this summer. The Route 102 bus (Carew/E. Springfield/Belmont/Dwight) now serves Cottage St. in the industrial park Monday through Saturday. PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz says, "We'll continue to provide good service to the working public, as their origins and destinations change with the urbanization of America."

* * * * *

The town of Longmeadow has begun offering in-town bus service on the "Town Tripper," a bus leased from PVTA. A special committee is working to sell enough yearly passes (at a cost of $20 apiece) to make the Town Tripper a completely self-supporting enterprise.

The Town Tripper is here! Arlene Miller, Longmeadow's PVTA Advisory Board representative, and Mark Dindas, Chairman of Longmeadow Shuttle, Inc., cut the ribbon for the new in-town shuttle bus.

* * * * *

PVTA's 1988 Bus Roadeo champion Mike Hamilton of UMass Transit Service travelled to Montreal in October, to compete in the International Roadeo sponsored by APTA, the American Passenger Transport Association. Hamilton said it was a very tough course, but he had a great time and found it to be a rewarding and educational experience.

* * * * *

Drivers at Springfield Transit Management put together another terrific month in August. They drove a total of 214,712 miles with no chargeable accidents. As they have done in the past, STM management personnel said "Thank you," by coming in at 4:00 a.m. to serve the drivers coffee and donuts.

* * * * *

Plans are underway for this year's "Santa Rides the Bus!" promotion. Watch for Santa Claus driving PVTA busses in Springfield and Holyoke on December 20th and 21st.

Expo Service Turns Corner!

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's "Big E" Shuttle proved successful in two ways this year—both in increased ridership and increased transit package sales.

Ridership on the shuttle to the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield had been increasing annually until 1985, when it reached a high of 20,379 passengers. The numbers then declined in 1986 and '87, reaching a five-year low last year of 14,056 riders. PVTA's goal for '88 was to reverse the downward trend. That was successful, and the twelve-day fair ended with total ridership of 14,803—up 747 riders, or about 5%, over 1987. The turnaround was accomplished primarily through increased promotion of the shuttle service on the busses, in the media and at the PVTA office. Next year's goal will be to reach the 1986 ridership level of 16,564.

Sales of PVTA's Big E Shuttle transit packages also increased substantially this year. Those numbers had declined in 1986 and '87, to a low of 1,771. This year the downward trend was stopped and transit package sales increased to ,763—up 992, or nearly 36% higher than last year. It means more people who used the PVTA Big E Shuttle also took advantage of the reduced general admission price available through the purchase of the transit package. Next year's goal will be to hold this year's gains and try to increase transit package sales even further.

Planning for the PVTA Big E Shuttle begins months ahead of time. The shuttle busses run from downtown Springfield to the Big E gates every 20 minutes, from early morning to late night all twelve days of the Exposition. This year 29 extra drivers were used for the service, and they ran almost 1,100 total trips to and from the Big E. The transit packages go on sale two days before the fair opens, and are sold at the PVTA office. In addition, PVTA sets up a mini-bus on the sidewalk in front of a downtown shopping mall, and sells tickets from there both weekends of the fair.

This year's advertising included bus posters, radio and newspaper ads, and all PVTA drivers handed out flyers from tear-off pads. PVTA and the Eastern States Exposition share the cost, and the arrangement worked very well this year.

The Stars Shine Bright at PVTA

Those of you who have cable television may have noticed this summer that "the best show in town" was PVTA's brand new 30-second TV commercial. The spot stars SuperDriver and a cast of thousands—er, five. PVTA Marketing Director Tracey Thompson combed the entire countryside searching for talent, and finally settled on these fine actors and actresses: Dan Williams, morning d.j. on WHYN-AM, in the starring role; Charlie Donovan, afternoon d.j. at WHYN, PVTA Programs and Planning Director Marlene Connor, Information staffer Kay Lanzetta, seven-year-old Sean Landers (son of Chief Financial Officer Cindy Landers), and seven-year-old Marie Walsh. All these people had one thing in common: they worked cheap.

"Look! Up on the Bus!" Cast of the second spot, left to right: Matthew Walsh, D. J. Gonzalez, Mary Commisso and Paul Healey.

The commercial was aired on Cable channels USA, MTV, CNN, and ESPN, and was very well received. PVTA then began the ardous task of trying to top it with a second spot. The second commercial again used SuperDriver with a multi-talented cast, this time co-starring PVTA Information Supervisor Mary Commisso. Mary had a bit of difficulty learning her part (her line was, "It's a bird!), but once rolling she was unstoppable! The rest of the group included WHYN morning newsman Paul Healey, STM Supervisor D.J. Gonzalez and seven-year-old Matthew Walsh (son of Special Services Coordinator Jo-Anne Walsh). This crew had that same amazing quality in comon with the first cast.

It's worth mentioning that, in keeping with PVTA's new advertising theme, SuperDriver's costume consists of lavender tights, deep purple cape and briefs, and yellow belt and boots. And in truth, SuperDriver did not work as cheap as the rest of the talent. Small wonder.

Filming both commercials was a lot of fun, and everyone involved did a terrific job. Thanks go to the cable production crew, directed by Adam Marx; to cable salesman Jerry Slattery, who let us take over his home for the first shoot; to Center Square for letting us shoot the second spot there; and of course to all of the talent.

Here are just a few of the filming highlights: having to stop filming while the garbage truck slowly passed by . . . D. J. Gonzalez trying to break into Tracey Thompson's car to rescue her keys . . . Dan Williams making stupid faces to get just the right reaction shots of the kids . . . Tracey telling the Center Square security guard she has to go in the bathroom with Dan to help him get dressed . . . Paul Healey falling on the ground with laughter at first sight of Dan in his costume . . . Mary Commisso doing everybody's lines but her own . . . Dan trying to "fly" while standing on a stationary PVTA bus . . . and the Chinese gentleman who fell into line and let SuperDriver help him into the bus with the rest of the cast!

ABOVE: "May I help you?" SuperDriver helps cast members onto the bus. He also helped an elderly gentleman on, who happened to fall into line by mistake. BELOW: "It's SuperDriver!" Cast of the first spot, left to right: Charlie Donovan, Marlene Connor, Marie Walsh, Sean Landers and Kay Lanzetta.

Cast and crew for the first cable spot, including SuperDriver (3rd from left in back row), and Director Adam Marx (4th from right).

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The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

In Transit

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTION OCT 19 1990 University of Massachusetts Depository Copy

Edited by
Jennifer A. Geran

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PVTA Delivers the Morning News!

PVTA passengers have been catching up on the news while riding to work with complimentary copies of the Springfield Union-News. It's all part of the Authority's spring advertising campaign, "*The PVTA PAYOFF*," which began in early February and will run until mid-April.

The PVTA Payoff offers riders on selected routes and trips the opportunity to win a variety of prizes along with their free morning newspaper. "We think it's a nice way to remind our passengers that they can use the time on board productively —to catch up on the news, to relax with a novel, whatever" says PVTA Marketing Director Jennifer Geran. "And the bonus prizes are a little extra 'thank you' to our passengers for riding with us."

The Authority is working with the Springfield Newspapers, Stagewest, the Paramount Theatre, and the Springfield Indians on the payoff promotion. Tickets to local events donated by these co-sponsors, lottery tickets, and bus passes are among the bonus prizes lucky riders can win.

Response to the promotion from PVTA passengers has been positive. Springfield resident Jennifer Black won two free tickets to see the Springfield Indians on Route 108. "The bus drivers are always pleasant, and I enjoy riding the PVTA very much. Thank you (for the tickets)!"

PVTA Roadeo winners: 1st, Truman Easton; 2nd, Ramon Castro; 3rd, Leonard Houle; 4th, Willie Clark; and 5th, Lula Palmer.

Another Step for Safety

PVTA's best and brightest braved a snowy Sunday morning in February to gather for the ninth annual Safety Awards Brunch at the Holiday Inn in Holyoke. Over 100 drivers and mechanics were honored at the brunch for their outstanding safety records in the performance of his or her duties for the PVTA. Springfield Mayor Mary E. Hurley was on hand to lend her support and approval to the men and women who make public transit in the Pioneer Valley safe.

PVTA Marketing Director Jennifer Geran greeted the attendees, saying "I cannot resist pointing out the public relations value of running a *safe* transit system. After all, no amount of work on my part could compensate for the negative impression a serious accident would give the public. And so I guess I ought to thank you all for making my job a bit easier!"

PVTA Safety Coordinator Bill McCullough commented that those honored had achieved a total of over 1100 combined years of accident-free driving and repair service. Awards were presented by PVTA Administrator Robert Manz and the directors of operations of the three carriers represented at the brunch: Springfield Transit Management, Longuiel Transportation, Inc., and Western Mass Bus Lines.

Local television stations took the opportunity to give the Authority a little positive publicity. Channels 22 and 40 arrived despite the storm and spent some time filming and talking with some of the drivers being honored. Lenny Houle (STM) and Ron Benoit (STM) did fine jobs of explaining their personal strategies for safe driving and were ex-

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PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz

Letter from the Administrator . . .

We are rapidly approaching a peak time of activity at PVTA. During the last quarter of FY '90, we must complete the following: adopt the FY '91 budget; enter into transit contracts for the three areas of service; have one new contractor negotiate a labor contract with ATU; and work with the legislature to secure sufficient funding to cover FY '90 expenses. Any *one* of the above is a major task, and they all have many unknowns. The patience and cooperation of all parties is a must if we are to be successful in these projects.

The key to maintaining our transit system in its current form is ridership. Except for December '89, a record-breaking cold month, our ridership is ahead of FY '89. Our number one job is to continue this growth so we can reach the 12 million mark again in FY '91.

PVTA Shows Its Holiday Spirit!

The unusually cold weather in November and December helped everyone get into the holiday mood a bit early this year, and the Authority was no exception. Chairman of the Advisory Board John Clobridge, Administrator Robert Manz, and Marketing Director Jennifer Geran braved the bitter weather on November 21 to represent PVTA at a press conference kicking off the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Holiday Awareness Campaign. Springfield Mayor Mary E. Hurley was on hand to tie a red ribbon—MADD's symbol—on her city vehicle, and representatives from the Massachusetts State Police and the Registry of Motor Vehicles did the same.

The Authority also "tied one on" for MADD! All PVTA buses were outfitted with the red ribbons for the season to help raise public awareness and support for MADD's cause. Laura Finn, chairperson for Project Red Ribbon, told the Authority, "Because of your support we were able to reach thousands of Western Massachusetts residents with our most powerful message of the year . . . together we have made a difference."

Fran Doyle made a great St. Nick!

There was more red to be seen on PVTA buses in mid-December! The Authority once again gave Santa Claus the wheel on routes in Springfield and Holyoke. Fran Doyle and Lenny Houle (both of STM) did great jobs playing jolly Saint Nick and passing along a little holiday cheer. As usual, PVTA allowed all passengers boarding Santa's buses to ride for free, and ridership was strong. Local television stations were also on hand to let the public know that Santa had reached the Pioneer Valley a bit early this year!

PVTA's On-Line!

After months of preparation and negotiation, the PVTA finally upgraded its computer system in February. The Authority had been using a computer that was six years old—ancient in terms of a computer's lifetime!

As is always the case, there were many obstacles which had to be overcome before the system was up and running. The successful end-result was, in large part, due to the exceptional efforts of PVTA's System Administrator Patricia Robitaille in planning and coordinating the upgrade. Patty deserves kudos for service beyond the call of duty, since she was called upon to spend a weekend working with Prime Computer's installers to get the system in place for Monday morning. Thanks, Patty!

PVTA recently installed several new concrete and metal trash receptacles at area bus shelters in an effort to encourage people to "pitch in" and keep greater Springfield litter-free. Shelters at Center Square, Main and Harrison Avenue, St. James Place, and Harrison Avenue, and their surroundings will now be cleaner and more attractive. The five receptacles purchased by PVTA will provide a convenient way for people waiting in bus shelters to dispose of any food or beverage containers they may have. The Authority hopes that the receptacles will also be used by passers-by, helping to cut down the amount of trash littering our streets. The PVTA believes that keeping our cities and towns clean requires a team effort and asks that we all "pitch in" to make it work!

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The first of four buses purchased this past summer by PVTA under its Bus Improvement Program hit the road in October. The four 1972 30 foot GMC buses just might be the bargains of a lifetime! The Authority acquired the buses from the Grand Rapids Transit Authority in Grand Rapids, Michigan, at no cost. GRATA had taken them out of service and offered them as surplus property for the cost of transporting them to Springfield, about $1,100 per vehicle according to Director of Maintenance Jim Besaw. Outfitted in PVTA's traditional blue and white color scheme, the newest additions to the PVTA fleet were called "effectively grand buses in their appearance" by Advisory Board Chairman John Clobridge. PVTA Administrator Robert Manz says the 30 foot GMC buses are particularly efficient, operating at half the cost and almost half the maintenance cost of other buses.

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PVTA headquarters will no longer be open for information and pass and token sales on Saturdays. Beginning March 10, the office began closing on Saturdays in order to address the issue of declining federal and state funding. The limited number of information calls which come in on Saturdays will now be handled by STM in the Springfield area and UMass Transit in the Northampton-Amherst area.

* * * * *

PVTA wishes Gabe Santanello the best of luck in his recent retirement! Gabe was an operator for STM from 1954 until his retirement in 1989, with a long safety record to his credit. According to Director of Operations Jim Wilcox, Gabe had an excellent rapport with his passengers. He was a past Santa driver, past president of ATU, and a favorite among his co-workers. Gabe will be missed!

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PVTA teamed up with the Springfield Union-News and the Springfield Public Schools to encourage students to learn about careers in advertising, graphic arts, and the media. PVTA took part in the Union's "Create-an-Ad" program, which allows students to submit advertisements for a participating company. The company chooses its favorite and runs the ad in a special section of the Union-News. The winners of the contest received cash prizes, as well as valuable exposure to a variety of career possibilities. Students from the Memorial School in Springfield were selected to create PVTA ads and they did a terrific job!

* * * * *

Some talented local artists had a chance to show their stuff recently. A mural created by the members of an art class at the Belchertown Senior Center has adorned a PVTA bus running at UMass since February. The mural represents the four seasons here in New England and is a wonderful tribute to the talent and cooperation fostered at the Senior Center. Watch for it en route!

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Safety Corner

The word SAFETY is defined by Webster as: "The quality or condition of being safe, freedom from danger, injury, or damage."

We of the Transportation Departments within the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority consider SAFETY a primary part of our day's work.

The bus operator is a special, professional person who drives a specially designed vehicle for transporting people. He or she has a special interest in people and is dedicated to safely moving them from one place to another. He or she is patient and understands the need to be able to adapt rapidly to an ever-changing work environment. The bus operator has to maneuver a large vehicle safely through traffic and stay alert for pedestrians who may wander into the intended path of travel.

He or she must communicate with other drivers by the use of directional signals, or horn, to inform them of the intention to change direction of travel, or of stopping the bus. The bus operator performs a vital service for the Pioneer Valley.

When you see a PVTA bus moving along, give a wave and a big smile to the operator. It will help to make his or her day a little easier!

William J. McCullough
PVTA Safety Coordinator

Expanding Our Special Services

The PVTA is currently in the process of contracting with Medicaid (Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare) to become the broker for non-emergency Medicaid transportation in Hampden and Hampshire counties. The goal of the program, according to PVTA Director of Programs and Planning Marlene Connor, is to centralize and streamline special transportation that the state pays for under Medicaid.

Under the current Medicaid transportation system, individual contactors provide the service, but costs and quality can vary. As the broker for all Medicaid non-emergency transportation, PVTA hopes to make better use of existing vehicles and to save the state money while providing a consistent quality of service.

The process of centralizing special transportation service was started by the Authority several years ago. FY '91 will mark the fourth year that PVTA has provided transportation services to the state's Department of Mental Retardation. The program, initially begun with six vans, now utilizes 15 vans to provide over 140 passengers each day with rides. The DMR program has allowed the state to provide consistently high-quality transportation to its special needs residents. The Authority, meanwhile, is able to cover the costs of its DMR program and expects the new Medicaid program to do the same.

A new Special Services Coordinator will be responsible for the Medicaid program, including a computerized dispatch and billing system. The program, which is expected to begin in April or May, will eventually serve Springfield, Chicopee, Holyoke, Northampton, and Westfield, and will transport nearly 180 passengers each day.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz presents Louise Wadsworth with the key to Belchertown's newest vehicle.

New Vans Mean Better Service

The Authority strives to provide its special needs passengers with the highest quality of service available. To do so, PVTA keeps its fleet of lift-equipped vans and station wagons in top shape. The following is a list of agencies who recently received new vehicles for their special transportation programs for elderly and handicapped residents:

Amherst Council on Aging
Belchertown Council on Aging
Chicopee Vocational
Northampton Council on Aging
Wilbraham Council on Aging
Hulmes Transportation
Town of South Hadley
Town of Easthampton
Chicopee Council on Aging
Springfield National Council for Black Aged

Another Step for Safety . . .

Continued from Page 1

emplary representatives of the Authority and its carriers.

Among those honored at the brunch were 17 men and women with over 15 years of safety under their belts: Truman Easton (STM) with 23 years; Stanley Krahala (LTI) with 21 years; Clayton Simino (STM) with 21 years; Charles Shaver (STM) with 18 years; Alan McPherson (STM) with 17 years; Ronald Benoit (STM) with 17 years; Rafael Gonzalez (STM) with 17 years; Barbara Raymond (WMBL) with 17 years; Gordon Cottingham (STM) with 16 years; William Kennedy (STM) with 15 years; Robert Grant (STM) with 15 years; Santos Rodriguez (STM) with 15 years; George Smith (STM) with 15 years; Dennis Stopa (STM) with 15 years; John Tarka (STM) with 15 years; Frank Cavanaugh (STM) with 15 years; and George Clark (STM) with 15 years. Congratulations to all!

In The Fast Lane

Three new faces have joined the PVTA headquarters at 1365 Main Street . . . Angela Thomas is Executive Secretary and Clerk of the Advisory Board; Jennifer Geran is Director of Marketing and Public Relations; and Joseph Capozza is the newly appointed Director of Contracts and Planning. Welcome to all!

* * * * *

STM General Manager Peter Hefler, Marketing Director Jennifer Geran, and STM Supervisor D. J. Gonzalez participated recently in Van Sickle Junior High School's annual career day, Jobforce 2000. Students were given the opportunity to talk with representatives of a variety of careers, from bus operator to astronaut. Many students stopped to talk about PVTA, either as a potential future employee or just as a current rider! The kids seemed especially delighted with D. J.'s charm and humor, and the experience was as fun and interesting for PVTA representatives as it was for the students!

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PVTA Director of Programs and Planning Marlene Connor had an opportunity to practice her "camera presence" in early October. Marlene was a guest on Pete Dragon's weekly half hour show "Page 57," on WGBY TV. The program focused on the outlook for public transportation in the Pioneer Valley in the next decade. Jim Cope of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission accompanied Marlene on the show, and both did a great job of communicating the importance of public transportation to the Pioneer Valley's future.

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Once again this year, the Information Office set up a table at Holyoke Community College's orientation day in January. Info staff member Simone Couture did her usual great job of helping new and returning H.C.C. students with schedules, bus maps, and route information. Servive to Holyoke Community runs directly from several cities and towns, including Springfield, Holyoke, Chicopee, Westfield, Northampton, and Easthampton, and students are encouraged to take advantage of the convenient and economical commuting option.

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Springfield Mayor Mary Hurley makes the first contribution to STM-ATU's "Can Can Drive."

Springfield Transit Management recently kicked off its second annual "Can Can Drive" to collect canned goods for the Open Pantry. STM operator Joe Casineau is in charge of the drive again this year. "Last year we collected 1000 lbs. of canned goods. This year, I'd like to double that!" he said recently at a kick-off ceremony in Mayor Hurley's office. The can drive is a cooperative effort between STM and ATU Local 448. Casineau said that the can drive is just one of the community outreach efforts that STM is involved in.

Anyone wishing to donate to the food drive can send their canned goods to STM to Joe's attention. "This year we'd like to hit our goal, and even go over the top!" said Casineau.

Greater Springfield . . . A Quality Community?

Everyone around here believes the quality of life to be outstanding, right? But when I look at what really comprises a "quality" community for the business person, I'm not so sure.

Let's take a look at what was described as a "quality" community by an outside visitor. I'm quoting from a speech entitled "An Image of the Potential of a Quality Community" made at the William G. Hunter Conference, Madison, Wisconsin, in April, so you don't think this is just my idea!

"If you visit the community devoted to total quality, you will arrive at the airport on time and find the place clean and the people friendly. Your baggage will be waiting at a clearly marked place very close to the exit to the terminal, on the ground level where the taxis are waiting. As you get into your cab, the driver asks for the name of your hotel and telephones ahead to confirm your reservation and tell the hotel you are on the way. As you arrive, the doorman greets you by name and the hotel has the registration form ready for you to sign. All the necessary information has been taken from the computer because the travel agent or your secretary was asked for the details when the reservation was made.

"In the morning your wake-up call is accompanied by an offer of coffee or tea. The hotel has supplied a disposable toothbrush and toothpaste tube so you no longer carry as many things in your travel kit when you visit this city. As you finish your breakfast in the coffee shop the waitress asks you to sign your bill and inquires if you need transportation to your next destination. She asks if you are checking out so the bill can be ready for you.

"As you go to the next destination, the cab driver asks you if he can call ahead for you to confirm your arrival. You note that the street signs are easy to see. Store fronts are of various designs, but all are either new or newly painted and the displays are attractive. Traffic flows smoothly. You note that the taxicab is clean both inside and out.

"At the firm you are visiting, the receptionist asks your name and immediately tells you that she has told your host of your expected arrival and gives you the number of the room in which the meeting will be held. A small packet of information is waiting for you to help you prepare for the meeting and to provide a format for your own note taking. The receptionist asks about your departure plans and asks if you need transportation to the airport and if so, at what time.

"All over America the citizens have become habituated to a low quality of service in their communities. They excuse poor quality in the handling of trash, in cleaning of streets, in restaurants, in "service" stations, in hotels. Poor quality does not have to be the norm. We can have a better life.

"We believe these things are not "cultural." We believe that the way employees behave is a reflection of the way things are managed. The key to a better quality community lies in the reeducation of our managers.

End quote! I believe that the people who made this presentation, Kathy Lusk, Ph.D.; Myron Tribus, Ph.D.; and Carol and David Schwinn, know what they are talking about. I also believe that although Greater Springfield has a very high quality of life, it could be much better. Better for visitors, citizens, businesses, children, politicians, etc. The secret is better management, better quality, continuous improvement, involvement, teamwork, higher expectations—hard work! That's what this Chamber is all about, QUALITY, and we think we need to work hard on the concept to really make the Pioneer Valley a quality place in which to live and work.

James L. Shriver
President
Greater Springfield
Chamber of Commerce

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The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

Special Van Focus Edition!

In Transit

Jennifer Geran Donais, Editor

Number 18
July, 1990

PVTA's Driver of the Year 1990 Karen Matlock (STM) and her passenger Isaac Olatunji, who wrote the winning letter.

PVTA Celebrates!

The rain held off just long enough for PVTA to celebrate **National Transit Appreciation Day** on May 16 with a short march down Main Street in Springfield. "Transit-on-Parade" featured marching bands from Cathedral High School and Duggan Junior High, members of the PVTA Advisory Board, students from the Chicopee Student Transit Education Program (STEP), and several PVTA bus drivers. STM driver Karen Matlock, this year's Rider's Choice Driver of the Year, led the drivers down the street and smiled proudly from behind her blue sash.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz kicked off the award ceremony following the parade by reading a proclaimation from Governor Michael S. Dukakis declaring May 16 Transit Appreciation Day in Massachusetts. PVTA Advisory Board Chairman John Clobridge led the Chicopee students in a chorus of "The Wheels on the Bus," and everyone gave a "Hat's Off!" salute to PVTA drivers and mechanics. Representatives from the offices of congressmen Silvio Conte and Richard Neal and Senator John Kerry were also on hand to read statements of support for public transportation. Springfield Mayor Mary Hurley read her proclaimation for Transit Appreciation Day and talked about her grandfather's career as a bus driver.

Members of the local media covered the celebration, giving the Authority some positive exposure to the public, and perhaps reminding people that public transportation plays a key role in our community.

Chicopee STEP kids marched along with PVTA to show their support for public transit.

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From the Administrator's Desk...

The '90s promise to be years of challenge and accomplishment for PVTA. Our state faces a rough economic road ahead, and until the economy rebounds, PVTA will be called upon to provide public transportation that is safe, reliable, and affordable to everyone in the Pioneer Valley.

Several years ago, PVTA was challenged to provide high quality transportation to our elderly and handicapped citizens. We met that challenge with great success. Our van services have expanded in the last five years and now provide rides for a large part of the Pioneer Valley's elderly and handicapped population. As we move futher into the future - a future in which the elderly population of our nation will grow significantly - we will continue to develop van transportation programs to accomodate them. Our service to the handicapped has improved, but there are many gaps which we will need to fill in the coming years.

PVTA's fixed-route service must also be tailored to meet the requirements of specific segments of the community: the working commuter; the students; the low-income families without other means of transportation; the young and the old alike. As our funding sources shrink and our services are trimmed down, we will need to carefully evaluate the transportation needs of our community and strategically plan to meet those needs. PVTA must determine the origins and destinations of our current and potential passengers, so that we can more readily accomodate them with convenient, reliable, and economical service.

But our challenges will not overshadow our accomplishments in the years to come. Our past acheivements will be the foundation upon which we will build our future successes. With the support and commitment of our staff, our contractors, and our community, we will create a system tailored to the needs of the Pioneer Valley throughout the next decade.

Robert D. Manz
PVTA Administrator

PVTA Begins to Broker Medicaid Transportation

On Monday, June 4, PVTA's Medicaid Transportation Program began to provide rides for many of Springfield's Medicaid recipients. According to PVTA Special Services Coordinator Jacqui Gravel, the Authority's new Medicaid telephone line started ringing first thing in the morning and almost hasn't stopped since!

The new program is the result of a contract between PVTA and the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare under which the Authority will act as broker for all non-emergency Medicaid transportation. Ultimately the program will serve Medicaid patients throughout PVTA's service area and provide approximately 180 passengers per day with rides to and from doctor's appointments.

PVTA's Medicaid program is part of a statewide trend toward having local transit authorities broker these non-emergency trips. The goal is to save the state money and provide a consistently high quality of service to patients. According to PVTA Director of Programs and Planning Marlene B. Connor, PVTA's program is the fourth such program in Massachusetts, following Worcester, Merrimack Valley, and Brockton regional transit authorities.

Amherst and Northampton Van Programs to Merge

The paratransit van service programs in Amherst and Northampton will be joining forces this summer in an effort to combine administrative functions and regionalize service delivery while maintaining personalized service.

According to Sal Colbert, Access Services Coordinator in Amherst, planning for the merge has been "in the works" throughout fiscal year 1990. "We are paying special attention to developing a harmonious blending of service quality and operational efficiency between the two long-standing, excellent systems," says Colbert.

The merge should be completed sometime in July.

If you would like to submit an article for inclusion in future editions of *In Transit*, please send it to Jennifer Geran Donais at PVTA, 1365 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

PVTA Van Operator's Guide In Print!

PVTA's newly published *Van Operator's Guide* has just hit the shelves. Designed to explain the Authority's requirements and policies for its van operators, the manual will help current and future van operators to uderstand their responsibilities and give them a handy reference source for their questions.

The guide is the product of a joint effort by PVTA Safety Coordinator Bill McCullough and Director of Marketing and Public Relations Jennifer Geran Donais. Copies can be obtained from either of the authors or through your supervisor.

STM driver Lenny Houle talks to a group of Chicopee fourth - graders about bus safety.

PVTA Teaches Kids to "STEP" Up to Public Transit

Over 400 Chicopee fourth-graders participated in this year's fourth annual Student Transit Education Program (STEP). After a short classroom discussion bus safety, the students were taken by bus to STM's garage where they toured the facilities and learned about the men and women who make public transit run in the Pioneer Valley. As usual, the kids loved it! As usual, the highlights of the tour were Joe Popielarczyk's money counting machine and the bus wash.

The STE Program gives PVTA an opportunity to teach Chicopee's students "the public transit habit" early and provide them with the safety information they need to use the system responsibly. Many of the kids were especially interested in learning about what kinds of jobs exist in the public transit field. Maybe these students will become tomorrow's bus drivers, mechanics, supervisors, and dispatchers!

PVTA hopes that when these kids are old enough to go places on their own, they will feel comfortable and safe using public transportation because of their participation in this program. Hopefully they'll be more likely to use it as well!

Safety Corner

A Salute to PVTA Van Operators

Every day, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority provides van transportation to the elderly and handicapped citizens of local communities. The drivers of these vans are dedicated, concerned, and patient people whose job is truly a human service. Many times, van operators are involved in "hands on" situations such as placing a wheelchair passenger on a lift or assisting a passenger in safely boarding and exiting the van. It is at these times that our drivers' caring and concern for their clients is most obvious.

Frequently, PVTA drivers develop meaningful and unique relationships with their passengers. They become an essential part of the passenger's life, not only for the practical service they provide but also for the companionship and independence they give. Without the dedicated service of PVTA van drivers, many people would be left housebound, without transportation to even the most important of destinations.

Each and every day, PVTA van operators hit the streets, motivated by their desire to provide the very best transportation possible. Their professional attitude and their personal touch can mean the world to the passengers they carry.

Won't you join PVTA in saluting these van drivers whose daily efforts make such a difference in the lives of individuals throughout the Pioneer Valley? If you see a PVTA van pass by, smile and wave as a gesture of appreciation for all these drivers accomplish.

William J. McCullough
PVTA Safety Coordinator

This Month's *Safety Thought...*
When driving, you may have to stop at a flashing yellow light if it isn't safe to proceed, so approach it at a speed from which you can easily stop.

In the Fast Lane

STM General Manager Peter Hefler recently did some time in jail for a worthy cause: the American Cancer Society. Hefler was arrested in his office and taken away in handcuffs by two off-duty Springfield Police officers. He then joined the handful of other "convicts" in the Cancer Society's cell at Monarch Place. Hefler's bail was set by the judge at $500, but he was able to raise $519 before his one-hour sentence was served!

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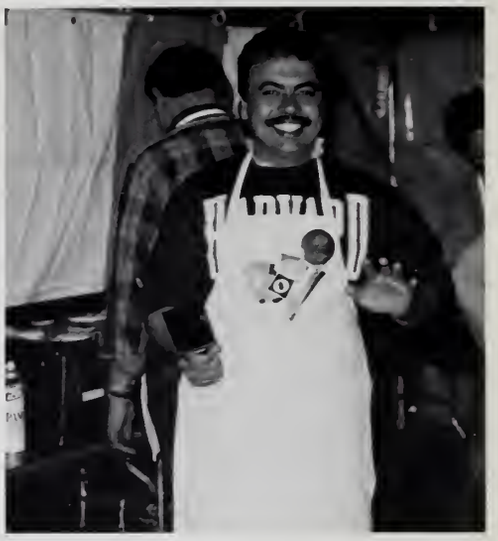
PVTA welcomes the newest addition to its administrative staff...Jacqueline Gravel has joined the Authority as Special Services Coordinator responsible for PVTA's Medicaid Transportation Program. Jacqui comes to us from the Holyoke office of Congressman Silvio O. Conte where she worked as an aide to the congressman for three years. Welcome, Jacqui!

Several of STM's best chefs lent their talents to this year's edition of Springfield's Annual Pancake Breakfast, held May 19 in downtown Springfield. We tip our chef hats to the following STM employees who flipped for the thousands of hungry breakfasters:

P. Hefler
M. Baez
J. Wilcox
D.J. Gonzalez
J. Casineau
J. Libereo
R. Morgan
P. DeFilio
K. Ellsworth
L. Hamilton
B. Germain
J. Colkos



Food, folks and fun were in abundance at Chicopee's second annual "Taste of Chicopee" fest. PVTA bus operators were given special hats to wear during the four-day event to thank them for their cooperation in rerouting the buses away from the crowded downtown streets. PVTA Driver of the Year Karen Matlock was among the drivers presented with Chicopee Centennial hats to celebrate the event.

* * * * * * *

Springfield Transit Management has joined BayState Medical Center's Blood Donor Program in an effort to restock the center's depleted blood supply. STM's drive was kicked off by General Manager Peter Hefler and PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz, who each donated a pint for the worthy cause. Also helping to get STM's participation off to a healthy start were Supervisor D.J. Gonzalez and operator Joe Casineau. Both gave their fair share in the hopes that other STM and PVTA employees would do the same. Anyone interested in donating blood in the name of STM should contact Joe Casineau.

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PVTA was represented at the first annual MARTA Statewide Paratransit Roadeo on June 16 by van operators Carmen Garcia and Rufus Ellis, both of Hulmes Transportation. It was a hot day in the parking lot of Bridgewater State College in Brockton, Mass., but the competition was even hotter! Garcia and Ellis handled the tough obstacle course admirably and were fine examples of PVTA's many skilled van drivers. Great job, guys!

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The Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

In Transit

Jennifer Geran Donais, Editor

Number 19
March 1991

1990 Big E Shuttle Ridership Breaks Record

It was a great year to go to the Big E, and more riders than ever took advantage of PVTA's convenient shuttle service to get there. This year's Big E shuttle, "the Big *Express*", carried a record-breaking 29,423 riders over the course of the 12-day annual exposition, breaking the previous all time high ridership of 20,379 in 1985.

PVTA Administrator Robert D. Manz said the dramatic increase over last year's numbers is attributable to several factors, including good weather, a strong exposition program, well-placed signs on the major roadways directing motorists to the shuttle, and the overall marketing campaign.

But a great bargain certainly doesn't hurt! And that's exactly what shuttle riders got if they took advantage of PVTA's Big *Express* package deal. The package saved fair-goers $2.00 off the cost of regular Big E admission, plus included shuttle transportation back and forth from downtown Springfield. Over 8,500 of the $5.00 packages were sold between August 29th and September 23rd, the last day of the exposition.

PVTA's main office staff worked hard to keep pace with the demand for tickets, and the line of waiting customers often stretched out the door. In additon to selling the package from the office, the Authority also set up two Steyr minibuses -- outside Center Square and at the I-91 North parking garage on Columbus Avenue -- to make the package available on weekends during the fair.

PVTA Director of Marketing and Public Relations Jennifer Geran Donais said that this year's success presents a challenge for next year. "I'm hoping that we can use what we learned this year in order to improve ridership even further in September of 1991." She also said that credit for the shuttle's success must be shared with the Exposition's staff. "This year, we worked *together* to communicate to fair-goers the convenience and savings they could expect from PVTA's shuttle service."

Renovation Begins!

Historic Firehouse To Become Office Space

A brief groudbreaking ceremony was held in December to kick off the renovation of the old North Main Street firehouse which will soon house PVTA's administrative offices.

Springfield Mayor Mary E. Hurley was on hand to view the building in its preconstruction state and to say a few words about what the project means to the Authority and to the City of Springfield. The Mayor was given the honor of prying open the old front door of the building, symbolically beginning phase 1 of the reconstruction.

Construction by Fontaine Bros. of Springfield began in earnest shortly after the ceremony. The expected completion date of the project is October, 1991.

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From the Administrator's Desk...

As we review the first half of FY'91, we can look back upon a six-month period of effort and progress. Although the Authority is still wrestling with its budget and the need to provide public transportation services within its means, we *have* vaulted several hurdles which will bring us closer to the final goal of providing cost-effective and highly efficient public transportation to the valley.

On January 2, 1991, Transit Express, Inc., took over transit management responsibilities for the Authority, replacing the three separate companies which ran our routes with one consolidated operation. The greatest compliment to the management staff at STM for their handling of the contract implementation is the fact that our passengers saw no difference in their bus service during the change.

In addition to the Authority's efforts to consolidate its management structure and realize savings through a contract, PVTA also made several changes to routes during December and January. These changes were made in order to provide more cost-effective service to those people who use and need it most. Changes to two Holyoke routes, two Springfield routes, and the Longmeadow service should result in considerable operational savings to PVTA, without significantly decreasing the service on the streets.

As we move further through FY'91, the Authority will continue to strive for the best and most efficient transit service it can provide to the transit users of our community.

Robert D. Manz
PVTA Administrator

Firehouse Project Gets Underway

Continued from page 1

The firehouse was built in 1891 by the City of Springfield as home to the horse-drawn fire fighting equipment used at the time. Because the century-old building needed extensive renovation to make it suitable for modern fire equipment, the City determined in 1987 that it would be more cost-effective to build a new facility. The Authority purchased the building that year with plans to restore it.

In mid-1990, PVTA received a $498,000 grant from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) earmarked for the project. The capital grant will help defray the costs of both interior and exterior work, according to Marlene Connor, Director of Programs and Planning for PVTA.

PVTA will use the newly renovated building for its administrative staff, including its new Medicaid Transportation Office. The Authority's Information Office will remain at a downtown Springfield location to make interaction with its thousands of customers each month more convenient.

If you would like to submit an article for inclusion in future editions of *In Transit*, please send it to Jennifer Geran Donais at PVTA, 1365 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Van Driver Touched By Passenger's Journey

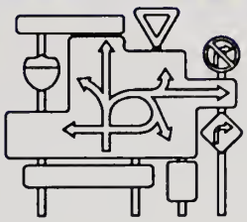
Councils on Aging exist to provide preventive services to the aging population. Through the structure of a senior center, Councils provide everything from recreation -- a necessary component in improving the quality of life -- to home care, services that enable a person to remain in his or her own home while recovering from an illness. However, for some an unhappy day comes when a beloved couple must be separated due to a variety of circumstances beyond their control.

These unfortunate occurances have touched all of our lives at one time or another. One such situation reached the heart of van driver Carol Geary (West Springfield COA), who sadly drove a loving couple to a nursing home, from which only one of them would return. She expressed her feelings as follows:

> The door opened on a cozy room, a selective collection of treasures holding a lifetime of memories each special in its representation. It was time to go. How I hated having to knock on that door. It would have been so much easier if they had been waiting outside. But these were precious moments, each one ticking away. They were final. When the door closed this time there would be no going back for her. He would return later, alone with his thoughts, to the room that, for him, would no longer be the same.
>
> They shared a lifetime of struggles side by side. Now it seemed almost cruel to keep her home. Life had provided circumstances far beyond his capability, and her needs were reaching out for constant care. How dare life separate them this way! But it happens. Decisions are made and lives are split unintentionally.
>
> I drove them to the nursing home, a beautiful place. One I would want my mother to go to if the time and need were there. The conversation about the weather and other small talk did not a hide the extreme emotions that filled the air. As we reached our destiny, it was time to let go. I had shared the most difficult journey they would ever take together. There was nothing to say. A passing thanks, an awkward "take care." For what little consolation it's worth, I only hope they know I understood.

Special thanks to Virginia Thompson and Carol Geary of the West Springfield Council on Aging for the preceeding piece. It serves as a poingent reminder of the important role our van drivers play in the lives of many elderly and disabled residents of our communities.

Safety Corner



At the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, safety is our most important concern. The service we provide -- public transportation -- requires that safety be foremost in eveybody's mind, from the maintenance personnel to the operators. Thus, consistently safe transportation is the goal that we must strive for every day.

As part of their training process, new maintenance people are assigned to an employee who has a well-established industrial safety record. The new employee is shown by example that a safe work place is a happy work place. The attitudes of established personnel will inspire new employees to produce a higher quality of work, which places a safer vehicle on the street for PVTA passengers.

All of our new employees must prove they have the professional committment and motivation to become involved in the safety program. In return for their efforts, the Authority recognizes its valuable, safety-minded maintenance peresonnel annually.

Our maintenance people must remember that the safety of our passengers depends upon their efforts and safety-mindedness as much as on those of our drivers.

William J. McCullough
Safety Coordinator

Safety Thought

Stay in your seat...
Buckle Up!

"I was most fortunate to have found a bus driver who was so kind, considerate and helpful. If it was not for this man, I doubt I could have made it to Holyoke. He truly went out of his way to help me."

- PVTA passenger Rose Latow, writing about TE driver Tom Loftus

In the Fast Lane

On Friday, February 22nd, PVTA hosted the newly-appointed **Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Construction, Richard Taylor,** for a tour of its Springfield facilities. Secretary Taylor and his collegues were taken from a downtown Springfield luncheon to PVTA's garage by two PVTA Special Services vans. The tour provided Secretary Taylor an opportunity to see first-hand the facilities that allow PVTA to provide the Pioneer Valley with high-quality, low-cost transportation. Following the Springfield tour, Secretary Taylor visited other locations in the area by PVTA van.

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At the request of a local human-service agency, PVTA has initiated bus service to Westfield's Center for Adults and Families along Route 110. Service to the Center began in early September, and currently provides public transportation to the Center's clients and employees. The Center's director, Steven Ruth, told the Authority, "Given our population and purpose, bus service is extremely important to us." The Center for Adults and Families relocated in August from its old location, which had been on a bus route, to its new offices.

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Trial bus service to an area shopping center generated high ridership over the holiday season. Service on PVTA's **"Shop-Hopper"** to The Riverdale Shops in West Springfield was so well-received that the Authority has requested an extension of the trial period. Riverdale's management and PVTA are currently discussing the details for the extension of the trial service along Route 217. Passengers have indicated that they found the service convenient and timely.

* * * * * * * *

Santa Claus could be seen once again this year driving PVTA's buses throughout Holyoke and Chicopee. STM driver **Lenny Houle** donned the red suit and white beard to drive PVTA passengers -- free of charge! As always, Santa received a lot of attention from the media, and our passengers appreciated their free ride, a "gift" from the Authority to its riders for the holiday season.

TE driver **John Librero** and Director of Transportation **Jim Wilcox** (below) were among those STM employees who celebrated a month of accident free driving. The recent early morning celebration included coffee and donuts served by management personnel to drivers in recognition of their outstanding records on the road.

Congratulations to all the drivers who participated in PVTA's Bus Roadeo back in August. This year's roadeo was the Authority's ninth annual competition for its drivers, who apparently like to have the chance to show their stuff behind the wheel. The weather could have been better, but spirits couldn't have been higher at the University of Massachusetts parking lot where the competition was held. Special kudos belong to STM's **Ramon Castro** and **Truman Easton** who tied with 549 total points. Ramon beat Truman by a nose by accumulating his points on the course quicker. But a good time was had by all, and everyone wins when our operators finetune their driving skills.

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PVTA is again in possession of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities (MARTA) Governors Cup! STM's **Truman Easton** roped the coveted cup at the annual statewide bus roadeo this past fall. Among stiff competition, Truman was able to keep his cool and maneuver his bus to first place. Once again, Truman has proved he's a tough act to follow!

* * * * * * * *

Senator Martin Dunn of Holyoke was on hand recently to to accept the keys to two new vans awarded to the Holyoke Council on Aging by PVTA. The new vehicles, which have replaced two older vans, will allow Holyoke to better serve the needs of its elderly and disabled passengers. Among the other communities receiving special transportation vehicles in the past several months are: Agawam, Chicopee, Easthampton, Westfield, and Longmeadow. PVTA now boasts a fleet of over 71 vans for special transportation programs.